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PAGES FROM THE DAY-BOOK

OF

BETHIA HARD-ACRE

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BETHIA HARDACRE

98172

BY

ELLA FULLER MAITLAND

FOURTH EDITION

LIBRARY OF THE BOMBAY BRANCH OF THE ROYAL ASIATIC

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1896

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RICHARD CLAY & SONS, LIMITED,
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TO

Frederick Greenwood

WITH MUCH GRATITUDE FOR HELP AND KINDNESS

IN THE WORLD OF LETTERS.

TO THE READER

"DISCREET and judicious Reader (if my Friend whoever) let me ingeniously intreat thee that in reading . . . thou wilt be pleased pàtiently to correct some faults, that partly by reason of the raggednesse of the written Copy, and partly by our oversight have escaped in the Presse."

MICHAEL DRAYTON.

PAGES FROM THE DAY-BOOK
OF
BETHIA HARDACRE

I

IF I could cultivate the spirit of pomposity, and extinguish the very slight sense of the ludicrous, to which I have attained after years of striving, I should, I am convinced, achieve far more than I do at present. "Pomposity is the soul of industry," is a maxim I would immediately write down in a copy-book had I to set tasks for the young and credulous. I have always observed that a pompous person is wafted easily on his or her way, happy in the belief of the extreme importance and value of all that he or she does. For myself, I cannot suppose that what I do is of the slightest moment. I cannot believe that what I do is, when done, worth doing. There is a saying the weight of which long ago penetrated to

the quick of my being—"Do men gather Grapes of Thorns, or Figs of Thistles?"

Instead of sitting to write that which at present I am writing, seated sideways on my chair, with the blotting-book upon my knees, and with the door of the room open so that my attention is disturbed by every trivial sound in the house, were I possessed of the quality of pomposity, or with the notion that my performances would be taken seriously, I should have placed myself with the writing apparatus arranged in orderly fashion before me, having told the servant that being about to engage in some momentous employment I could not be disturbed for any reason. I should be feeling that my work was the first object, and that the whims of my dogs or the sudden consciousness that a flowering Rose-bush on the window-seat is in need of water are trifles for the attending to which my pen must not be laid down, nor the flow of rubbish that runs from my brain be for a moment impeded. But whatever I do it is to the accompaniment of self-doubting and self-mockery. "Is it possible that what you can do can be worth doing? The world is overstocked with workers on a plane of merit far more exalted than that to which your capabilities will ever carry you. For good work even there is little room. Why cumber yet more the over-

stocked ground with indifferent? That which you produce is not likely to be worth production, 'Do men gather Grapes of Thorns, or Figs of Thistles?'" So prompts the spirit of doubt within me.

The work-worshippers, however, say, "Work for work's sake. Do not look for results, for rewards." It is not for rewards that I do look. I never had a weakness for loaves and fishes. I am disposed to ascribe to them less, perhaps, than their real value in the plan of existence. The miracles I would like best to see worked are not those productive of physical gain. I would prefer the multitude to have endured without material food, and to have found sustenance for the body in spiritual nourishment. That would have been, according to my notions, the nicer method; but it would not, I suppose, have brought the evidence of supernatural might so closely home to the multitude. Nor would it have exemplified the sacramental element with which seems fraught the teaching of the gospels. I cannot hold myself either to be wanting rewards. Worldly gains and gauds are really to me pretty well valueless, but I admit that I do want results. Otherwise labour seems to take to itself overmuch of the treadmill business, and that, I have always understood, proves a deadening, heart-breaking process.

Pages from the Day-Book

One reason, I believe, why the following of the gardener's and husbandman's trade has proved so comforting and healing to those sick of the life and ambitions of cities, is because toil in such Vineyards is productive of results plain to the toiler. When, as I did the other day, I sow a seed of blue Lupine, the act is closely followed by a cracking of the brown earth above the buried bean, and then the breaking forth of a green bi-valved treasure, which shortly opens, and permits the uprising of two starry dew-spangled leaves, springing from swift-growing slender stems. To those to whom the labour of the treadmill is particularly disheartening the gardener's craft is peculiarly attractive. Place some seemingly withered bulbs into autumn's damp, chilly soil, and you shall see as the outcome of that sad day's industry, a vivid blaze of rainbow-hued flowers—gorgeous Tulips, silver Snowdrops, Hyacinths, marvels of sweetness and delicate blossom. It filled of that grey morning's time but an hour or so, whilst the wild winds blew and the rain-clouds threatened to accomplish the task that resulted in weeks enriched with loveliest colour and fragrance.

Of Bethia Hardacre

WRITTEN IN MY COUSIN JULIA'S BIRTHDAY BOOK

(*Against the date January 8th*).

I CANNOT for my birthday claim
A flower-lit day of spring;
Nor one with Roses all aflame
Such as does summer bring.
Drifted 'mid flakes of icy snow
To this strange world I came;
"Whence?"—Julia, that I do not know;
"Whither?"—I say the same.

TO ——

With a gift of Autumn Violets.

THE Violets of the spring I send
Fit offering to fair-weather friend;
For you, who gladden saddest hours,
Most meet are these sweet autumn flowers.

LYSIDICÈ.

YES, unto Love, Lysidicè is kind
Because Love is a child, a child and blind;
How should a heart so soft as hers gainsay
A child (quite blind) who with her fain would stay?

II.

TO-DAY a man in the street implored me to buy a plant; "Take one at your own price," he said.

I answered him that I did not wish to buy one; I had as many, for the time, as I had space for in my room; but he would not be refused.

"Take one at your own price," he repeated, "to change the luck; for we have not sold one, as you can see. Take one, and bring us good luck."

"I am not likely, I am afraid, to bring you good luck, I am not a lucky person," I said to the man in the street.

"But you will," he said, "you will, if you would but take one, never mind what you pay. You can set your own price if you will but take one, and bring us luck."

I have often been besought to buy, and have had various reasons offered to induce me do so; but I

never yet came across so steadfast a believer in the luck that my buying would bring as this man.

I talked the matter over with him. I stood bare-headed on the doorstep explaining to the man in the street how peculiarly luckless I am. I offered arguments, and discussed pros and cons as though my refusal to buy a flower entitled the would-be seller to as many evidences of my lucklessness as have been found for Christianity; "and besides your plants are very fine," I added, "and you are sure to sell some."

The man in the street remained perfectly dogged.

"The luck's bad," he said. "If you would change the luck we might sell off the lot. It's the luck we want."

It is of course very foolish, but I sympathize with the credulous and vulgar minds that hope and strive after various methods to turn the luck when the luck is contrary. I am ashamed to say that I have often essayed myself to change the luck, and have stooped to disgraceful superstitions to achieve this end. I had a fellow-feeling all the while for the man in the street, but still I did not really waver in my determination not to buy till all at once I saw every vestige of hope and expectation fall quite suddenly out of his face. He shifted his basket, and was about to lift it preparatory to turning away.

A quick impulse moved me. "If you really think it will change your luck, I will buy one of your plants," I said.

(There are two expressions that human—yes, and canine—countenances take on that always with me bring a change of front. One is the look significant of humiliation, the other of the total relinquishment of lively hope. And my dogs, crafty creatures, have got, I really believe, to know of the latter of these two weak points in my moral armoury, and to trade upon it. So long as they sit with greedy, goggling eyes demanding more cake, when already they have had too much, I steel myself, with the consciousness of reason being on my side, to resist the extortionate demand. But when the poor creatures, with a sigh of despairing resignation to the brutality of fate, return with woebegone gait to their baskets, I generally call the gluttons back, and press into their readily opening mouths some of the delicacy they have coveted.)

The man in the street was profuse in his thanks; and did not go back from his offer to let me set my own price upon what I bought. My uncle and Antony will probably say that therein lay his cunning; for he would be quick to see that in me he had some one to deal with silly enough to offer him twice

as much as he would have the face to ask. How this may be I do not know; but I think that for the sake of the luck he was not inclined to extortion. The flower-of-luck that I chose was a Heliotrope in full blossom. It was very sweet indeed, and the seller showed himself grateful. "Lady," he said, "I thank you for your kindness; and the luck will change. I thank you, lady."

I hope the luck did.

It is only people in the street now-a-days who use the word lady after the manner of my believer in luck. Cabmen, and flower-sellers, and crossing-sweepers, and their kinds alone now give it such a place in their vocabulary. But the word as a form of address is a word of quality, and of exalted lineage, and has fallen from the diction of scholars and persons of high estate to its present lowly service. To me the word is pleasant in association always, recalling the lyrics of the Elizabethan dramatists—

I.

"Still to be neat, still to be drest
As you were going to a feast,
Still to be powdered, still perfumed:
Lady, it is to be presumed
Though art's hid causes are not found,
All is not sweet, all is not sound.

Pages from the Day-Book

2.

"Give me a look, give me a face
That makes simplicity a grace,
Robes loosely flowing, hair as free,
Such sweet neglect more taketh me
Than all the adulteries of art:
They strike mine eyes but not mine heart."

I am very grateful to the cabmen or the flower-sellers, or crossing-sweepers who in the sound of their "Lady" bring to my memory rare Ben Jonson's song. The tongue of the vulgar has kindly embalmed the word in its sixteenth and seventeenth century condition, and I value the favour so rendered to the language.

But can there be a word much more objectionable, much more meretricious than ladylike? It is one of Clara St. Quentin's words. "A ladylike person." It is terrible. "A ladylike person" suggests to my aggrieved mind some one who would speak of "commencing," and who would give her umbrella an extra syllable; a woman capable of saying that "it might appear peculiar" if she were to do this or that.

III.

WHEN I was a child, I used to tell my sisters stories of an evening as we lay in bed. I slept in a small room, the door of which opened into the large room in which they slept. I was willing enough to tell them the stories, for which they had an insatiable appetite, but I had a grievance connected with the affair. The grievance lay in the circumstance of their allowing me to go on with my story-telling after they had fallen asleep. This I considered unjust and inconsiderate conduct, and contended that I was entitled to due warning of the approach of that moment when they would slip from consciousness to sleep. As they did not fall in with my requirements in this particular, it became my custom to interrupt frequently the course of my narrative with the question, put in a raised voice—

"Are you asleep?"

When the inquiry failed to produce any response, or when the response was conveyed in tones so exceedingly drowsy and inarticulate as to lead me to believe that my audience had already passed, or was at least swiftly passing the threshold of the land of dreams, I myself relapsed into an offended and dignified silence. Sometimes in later years, when, on a warm summer afternoon, taking part in the service held in a village church, it has occurred to me that the preacher, if not too proud, with advantage could take a leaf out of my childish book. The bringing of the discourse to an end, unless satisfied through my primitive method that the attention of the congregation was still his, might save an expounder of doctrine or dogma much useless expenditure of voice, time, and labour.

The story-telling over, it was the story-teller's earnest endeavour to put herself to sleep. To be awake last had some alarming sensations linked to it. I do not know why exactly, but I felt safer in the darkness so long as my sisters were awake also—which sensation, perhaps, they shared with me, and therefore adopted the plan of letting me still speak on however near to slumber they approached. The victim of many a fear was I of a night, and the more frightened I became, the more wakeful. If my sisters,

as they said (though I was incredulous on this point) could not spin long stories after my profuse fashion, they at least could sleep; and for this faculty I envied them nightly. Sometimes in my wakefulness I would go into their room and sit upon the foot of one of the little white beds and shiver with cold and fright. But another dread sent me as often as not to my own bed again. My youngest sister would talk in her sleep, and this dream-talk with—to me—its touch of the uncanny filled me with vague alarm and horror. It was from a fable, a vain imagining, that I gained relief from my nocturnal terrors.

I used to "pretend" that for a great while I had wandered in a wild and savage moorland country exposed to the fierce fury of a storm. Peals of thunder, torrents of rain, wind of a hurricane's strength, fatigue, cold, exhaustion, distress, all these I would conjure up, and then I would picture the coming to a place of shelter, a harbour from the violence of the storm, and the perils of the way; and in this haven too, and between me and the terrors of the outer world, would be some one who kept the door, some one strong and suggestive of the safe protecting shadow-of-a-great-rock-in-a-weary-land feeling. I cannot number the nights, beginning with those of earliest childhood, that clinging to this notion I have fallen asleep; and

still even the remedy holds good and is the only opiate that I can count upon. For a very long while the presence between me and the terrors without took on no personality. Through all those youthful days, and for a while afterwards, there was nothing actual or clearly defined about that Maker of my Safety. Then suddenly I realised that the phantom to which since nursery times I had turned when scared and terrified had gained actuality, and was no longer a dim shadow without name and lineament. This knowledge came to me with a sense of shock. In a way that was magical the human presence into which the shadow had slid seemed taken back to be part of my life, years before I and the embodiment of my childish imaginings had ever really met.

"I have known you all my life," I said to the Maker of my Safety once. The Maker of my Safety looked surprised. "It was you," I went on, "that my fancy portrayed when I was six years old. It was you who, whilst I slept securely, kept the door, and prevented the lions, and the dragons, and the fearful coal-black bogies with red flames for eyes, from doing yourself or me any harm. How strong you have always seemed and safe."

IV.

BESIDES the pomposity to which I have already referred as a means to the end of labour, I am convinced that in conceit we have a valuable factor, too. Nature dowers human beings with conceit, I believe, and puffs them up with vanity so as to draw the more work out of them. It is said that the spirit of gaiety, of joyousness has died out of English literature. If this be so the critical, carping, cantankerous literary temper of the age signed the death-warrant; the present race of writers having to struggle on as best they may without those life-giving draughts of grandiloquent praise which publicly rewarded their forefathers' efforts, whatever sentiments their eulogists privately entertained. We have not now the happiness of launching volumes of petty verse to which are appended strings of complimentary sonnets, penned by our friends, extolling our wares to the skies. Did Mr. Brown give us now-a-days a hundred pages or

so of rhyme to which were attached lines by Mr. Robinson, apostrophising him in such terms as—

> Brown, latest darling of the Muses nine,
> Add to thy Laurel crown this meed of mine—

we should characterise the proceeding as at least unusual. But could poor Mr. Brown put back the date of his birth a century or two such tributes from his brothers in letters would fix for the vulgar public from the first the high water-mark to which its approval must likewise rise. If Mr. Robinson, himself a poet, addressed Mr. Brown as the latest darling of the Muses nine, and others of the confraternity did not spare pæan and panegyric, it made it excessively agreeable, doubtless, for Mr. Brown, who trod triumphantly to the sound of trumpets a world of letters the paths of which less happy nineteenth-century bards pace with no such soul-stirring salutations. Who can wonder that a tone of pessimism is now a distinguishing feature of British literature, and that the minor poet in particular harps, poor wretch, in the plaintive key? The most heart-broken songster amongst us would, I am positive, pull himself together and versify with a buoyancy that rejoiced and astounded no one more than himself were he satisfied that his music would go forth to the accompaniment of the resounding plaudits of his peers.

This lavish generosity in the matter of applause, too, accounts, I have little doubt, for the note of self-satisfaction that is struck so frequently in the introductions and prefaces of a past age. Before this century an author permitted no mock modesty to stand in the way of allusions to a previous work under the title of *My Masterpiece.* I have an instance before me of a writer, the date of whose title-page is 1725, giving as the cause of a possible want of finish in his forthcoming volume the uncontrollable impatience of his subscribers to get the book,—an impatience which forced him to put it in the press sooner than he intended.

Earlier still, blindness to self-merit seems to have been yet rarer. I read in the author's introduction to a volume printed in 1671 that a previous edition of the work "had a general reception, travelling up and down the kingdom, and, like the good Samaritan, giving comfort to all it met; neither have we known of any that have bought it, who have not testified their high esteem thereof." And after exhibiting yet more of a most refreshing complacency the scribe in the best of humours with himself and his readers (past and prospective), sums up the super-excellent qualities of his merchandise, and commits it to the tender mercies of publicity in the following terms—

"If we have given it too narrow a praise (for too large an Encomium I am sure we cannot attribute to it, considering its true value), it is not what we intended, though we are glad to see its own high deserts carrying it so much above the reach of a more than common repute. It is true there may be some faults, and those may justly cause us to be blamed; but now we hope your ingenuity will the rather forgive us and them, and with more diligence seek to amend what is amiss, if not for our sakes, yet out of charity to a work which is so charitable to yourselves. Farewell." But for the verification of my statement that letters languish when defrauded of the inspiring sunshine of homage and benison, I must still further retrace my steps, going back indeed as far as September 21, 1576, on which day from "Butley in Chesshyre," Thomas Newton penned the following words—

"Debating with myself the chiefe cause why artes and disciplines do (in these Alcyon days of ours) so universallye flourishe, although I knowe well enough that sundrye men can coigne sundrye reasons, and alledge manifold verdictes and probable argumentes therfore, yet in my simple judgement nothing more effectually whetteth the wittes of the studious, nor more lustelye awaketh the courages of the learned than doth the favourable furtheraunce and cheerful countenance of the Prince and Nobility. For honour,

preferment, dignity and prayse feedeth, nourisheth and maenteyneth bothe artes and vertues; and glorye is a sharpe spurre that vehementlye pricketh forward gallant heades and pregnant natures to attempt worthy enterprise."

Well might Thomas Newton, writing from "Butley in Chesshyre," on September 21, 1576, accord the age the title of "Alcyon." Edmund Spenser and Sir Philip Sidney still lived. The times had already given birth to Lyly, Peele, Robert Greene, Marlowe, Lodge, Shakespeare, Daniel, Barnfield, Southwell, Sir Walter Raleigh, the writers of the Elizabethan Miscellanies, Chapman, Drayton, Donne, Ben Jonson. The days drew swiftly on when Beaumont and Fletcher, Dekker, Ford and the poet of *Britannia's Pastorals*, dowered the race with their priceless gifts of tragedy and song.

What might not an aftermath of praise and patronage yield? As a step in the right direction, let the critics hurry to Ireland, kiss the Blarney Stone and as quickly come back.

V.

THE bird of India was fashioned by one of the patient craftsmen of India long, long ago. He is made of brass, and of brass, too, is the chain attached to which he hangs.

The bird of India came to me from the East. In a Holy Temple he had swung for no one knows how many hundreds of years. From that Eastern Temple to the bird's present domicile the flight is a long one. Since coming to me the bird has hung from a brass rod near the head of my bed. He is a mystic bird, I think, and sometimes swings and sways, propelled by no visible agency, but moved by a magical force the secret of which he shrouds.

For a long while now the bird of India has hung near the head of my bed. There he hung during the weeks and months when I was too ill to get upon my feet, and walk. He hung there all the while through

the days when I was better, and through the days when I was worse, and sometimes he would slowly sway and swing. I came to look upon him at last as a soothsayer, an augur. To the last title his right, being a bird, is undeniable; since augury from the beginning signified divination by birds — Augury, *Avium garritus*, the science of bird talk; and if by dumb show only the bird of India now condescends to speak, that is his affair, not mine, though I confess myself the loser by it.

The bird pays no heed to the common herd. No vulgar influence can touch his eternal calm. Concerning the movements of one person only does he deign to play the part of diviner. The base crowd may come and go, and no indication will he bestir himself to make. He is an occult bird, and if patient with the long-suffering patience of the uncomplaining East, very proud. Time is no object to him who has passed hundreds of years in the unruffled stillness of an Indian temple. For a thousand years he would again remain voluntarily motionless, were it not for the registering of the goings and comings of some one whose personality I have promised to keep from the pages of my book, lest my book fall into the hands of Mrs. Goodall or others of her kind.

The bird is very well burnished. He and his chain

—for the two are indissoluble—are taken down once a week, and polished with metal polish. The process may be undignified, and scarcely in character with the bird's sacred antecedents and mystical properties; but in finding the mechanism of life rather horrid the bird is not alone. And certainly, derogatory as the process may be, the result is very beautifying. The bird of India comes back from the scullery shining like gold, his plumage and chain positively a blaze of flashing yellow beams. *Il faut souffrir pour être belle* even if one is a mystic bird of India, and augur by right of birth.

If the bird of India would speak, what strange stories he would be able to tell. He had seen and heard so much beyond the busy world's ken. His stories would indeed be rich in local colour, and the sharp contrast between his present and his past contains the elements of the picturesque.

But as I lie this morning (for I am still in bed) and let my eyes linger on the metal plumage and aloof air that are the bird of India's, the thought that holds my fancy spellbound is this—

As the bird of India hung from his brass chain through ages before we of this generation troubled the surface of time with our hopes and our fears, our weal and our woe, so when we have passed

from time to the unknown, the bird of India on which my eyes now rest will still remain. The day following the one on which my eyes will close for ever on this world will see the bird of India poised as now, mute, inscrutable. The bird of India will remain, when I, who have used him as a lay figure on which to hang my fancies, will have passed for ever away.

It is curious to think that what to one of us means so much to another is without any signification. We do not see each other's ghosts, nor do we recognise their shadowy presence. The writing on our walls is not so written that all who run may read. Sometimes it has seemed to me as if it must be so, and impossible is it that what to me is so charged with meaning should convey no tidings to other human souls. But so it is. My friend Mrs. Macgaloshes may touch and handle that which is to me a very beacon, on fire with association, and no electric spark of passionate emotion disturb the even tenour of her roast-mutton-and-rice-pudding-governed thoughts. "Have no fear," as the folk north of Tweed have it, apropos of very different matters; the feet of the infidel may desecrate your Holy of Holies, but the additional pain of the mockery of the scorners will not be yours: for the very good

reason that the scorners will not recognise that there is aught to mock.

No, we need "have no fear"; so long as we keep silence, that which of ours is sacred will take on no distinguishing mark. No fragrance of incense, no breath of sanctity will tell the profaners (though standing before the very altar of our worship) that they tread on hallowed ground.

And for this reason I would be very tender with the properties of the dead. Who can say if that rubbishy script of paper did not find a resting-place nightly under poor Orinda's pillow, or if for the sake of that battered old book the dead Lydia would not have given away the Koh-i-noor itself? The rubbishy script of paper, and battered old book, for all the sanctification of the past, will not remonstrate of themselves if thrown into the dustbin. Let us therefore not throw them there.

Of Bethia Hardacre

TO A HEALER OF THE SICK.

In vanquishing their fellow-men some claim
The Laurel wreath, the trumpet blast of fame:
The guerdon of high honour you attain
Not by defeat of others but their gain.

TO LETTY,

Who wonders why peacocks are counted unlucky.

Deem it not strange that such fine creatures should
Betoken evil fortune and not good,
Since peacocks are the proudest birds of all,
And pride, remember, goes before a fall.

OF LOVE'S BLINDNESS.

They say that love is blind. As proof 'tis so
Vast intuition lovers truly show,
And, blindness quickening every other sense,
Love very likely does with sight dispense.

VI.

I HAVE some pleasant company to-day in my room. The company consists of some Fir-tree branches to which the baby-cones adhere after an engaging pattern. The baby-cones have not gone into a hard dusky or metallic green yet. They still present a downy texture, and a hue that varies from creamy white to amber. And when I touch them they shed a pale yellow powder soft as is that of Orris root. To imagine that I was in a wood, I let some fall against the sleeve of my black silk shirt; and when I told my maid that she must brush my gown, because the dust from the Fir-cones was thick upon it, I really felt for the moment as though I had been to the wood, not as Palamon in *The Two Noble Kinsmen* to gather Mulberries, but perhaps to watch the antics of the brown squirrels, and to gather the wild Hyacinths that among the roots of some

forest trees are now reproducing the blue of the sky.

My uncle, the Professor of all Philosophies, charged me once with letting my fancies run wild. I ventured to suggest that if this were so I run with them, and so give myself a great deal of exercise. To this supposition I got no rejoinder. As do the Japanese in their decorative work, my uncle, the Professor, understands I think the value of blank spaces. He rightly believes that silence "tells," and follows a plan of conversational procedure far removed from the uninteresting pattern to which, when speaking of wall-papers, builders and house-furnishers apply the term "well covered."

If on the occasion in point the mute reception of my observation signified disapproval or assent I am not in a position to state. The taking of exercise being, however, the first duty of mortals in the opinion of all members of my uncle's sex who are neither hypochondriacal nor effeminate, my plea was perhaps allowed. And in truth the letting-fancy-roam practice does prevent boredom. I may be everything else that is bad or indifferent, but I am never bored. I do not think the sensation has ever been mine since I gave up the going to places of amusement, and to entertainments given presumably for the amusement end.

Pages from the Day-Book

When for some years the door has been kept shut between oneself and the world of "society," on the setting of it once more ajar the most noticeable feature in the panorama thus disclosed is, I am inclined to think, the absence of real change. The folk at the present appear to be playing almost precisely the parts played when I looked out upon them last. Certainly if the actors have changed, the rôles and themes are so similar that, but for a few minor details in the way of attire and hair-curling, I could without difficulty imagine that it was yesterday, not quite a long while ago, that I closed myself into my room, ill.

If the ball to gain an invitation to which Mrs. Mammon is now striving to move heaven and earth is not the ball for which she lacked an invitation some years since, the grievance in connection with it is so nice a copy of the original as to be undistinguishable from its prototype. Mrs. Mammon's conversation to-day might be her words heard through the phonograph into which they were spoken in the spring of the year 1890—

"I asked Lady Hightowers to mine, and she came, and then she is so grossly impertinent as to leave us out. Not that I wish to go. Do not mistake me, my dear Miss Hardacre, by supposing for an instant that I wish to go. My girls have plenty of dancing,

more in fact than they care for. But it is the shocking ill-breeding that I object to. And she came to us;" &c. &c.

Poor Mrs. Mammon . . . I really do feel sorry for her. There is something pathetic in her situation it seems to me. Through all these years she has "grovelled," and yet she has made no way at all. A "new eye," as they say, would detect progress which a constant spectator might not perceive. But there is no progress to detect. This prolonged period of "grovelling" has not advanced poor Mrs. Mammon socially one whit. A glacier could outstrip her easily. It is really hard.

Yes, change is nowhere apparent. Down to the minutest trifles, excuses, huffs, grievances, expectations, one and all are cast in the mould of the past. Those of my acquaintance who then proclaimed bankruptcy are speaking of the sudden need of retrenchment still. Amelia is yet dreading her first fainting fit, and her father the General lamenting the structure of the rissoles of his last luncheon, and wondering why the club *chef* alone can cook a decent *filet de bœuf*. Amanda's pug is still asthmatic, and "that wretched woman" has not sent Amanda home her gown, "though she promised it so positively for the 29th, and knows that all the old ones

are in absolute rags." My cousin Ferdinand is still uneasy on the score of his health, and desirous of finding a chemist whose drugs can *really* be relied on. Ferdinand's wife is, as before, certain that there is nothing amiss with either Ferdinand or the drugs. "If he had not left the army as he did (quite, as you know, Bethia, against my wish), he would not have time for these silly fancies that now, for want of something better to do, he positively gloats over." Those of my friends who were changing their servants in 1890 are seemingly changing them now. The black satin of Mrs. Goodall's present evening gown which she bought at a "sale," "and they said was reduced," is wearing as ill as did its predecessor from the same source, and branded with the like legend five years back. The abettors of the Girls' Friendly Society and of the Primrose League, and the wielders of paint-brush and pallet, of pen and ink, and violin's bow, are repeating pretty well word for word the phrases that I remember of old. Clara St. Quentin is actually *longing* to get to Scotland this autumn; the refreshment of the magnificent scenery and delicious quiet would positively put life into her, but home ties have still the first claim, and a course of Homburg waters always does do Mrs. St. Quentin's rheumatic gout good; or at least prevents it from getting very much

worse. My brother-in-law is still refusing Letitia leave to give a ball, and she is yet strengthening her case by assurances that "of course he might go to bed if he liked and see nothing of it." And the well-worn argument still produces the well-worn retort, "My dear, I should *hear* a good deal of it unless I could be blessed with stone deafness first."

I feel as if I knew all about it. Why not shut the door again, and be quiet in the company of a select few mortals, immortals rather, and many books?

VII.

I LIKE the scent of Rosemary—Rosemary sacred to remembrance—the aromatic perfume that resembles the odour of frankincense, as Pliny wrote in his natural history, a resemblance to the which the French name, *Incensier*, and the old English Incense-wort bear testimony.

"They plant it in their gardens and maintain it with great diligence," Lyte in his Herbal writes; and both Lyte and Gerard state that the Arabians and other physicians held that "Rosemary comforted the braine, the memory, the inward senses, and restoreth speech to them that are possessed with the dumb palsie"; further telling that the flowers, made up with sugar, "comfort the hearte, and make it merry, quicken the spirits, and make them more lively"; whilst the oil of Rosemary, "chemically drawn, comforteth the cold, weak, and feeble braine in most wonderful manner."

Gerard's chapter, "Rosemary and his kindes," is

very attractive, and shows woodcuts of sundry sorts of Rosemary. The *Rosmarinum Coronariuin* (garden Rosemary), the wild Rosemary, and the *Casia Poetica* or Poet's Rosemary, figure there. "Women having been accustomed to make crowns and garlands thereof," he gives as the reason for the title *Coronarium* as borne by the garden Rosemary. Rosemary has a place in John Parkinson's Flower-book. "Rosemary," we read, "is found in every woman's garden, and when planted against brick walls it rises to a very great height, and has served to make lutes and such-like instruments." Of the virtues of Rosemary Parkinson writes, "Rosemary is almost of as great use as Bayes. . . . Inwardly for the head, and heart, and outwardly for the sinewes, and joynts; and for civill uses, as all do know, at weddings, funerals, and to bestow among friends; and the physical are so many that you would be as well tyred in the reading as I in the writing if I should set down all that might be said of it." A lute fashioned from the wood of Rosemary—"Rosemary for remembrance"—is a notion fraught with romantic suggestions. Surely from such an instrument the sweetest songs might float.

Rosemary, dew of the sea, another name for which was Garderobe, grew so plentifully in the south of Spain and France that the people of "Langudocke,"

the old writers relate, burnt little else for fuel. As an instance, too, of the herb's abundant growth on the coast, a seventeenth-century botanist states that "those who sail in the open sea at many leagues distance can easily smell it, even before they see land." The people of "Langudocke" made use of it also for other than fuel purposes, fashioning combs from the wood of Rosemary, with which they combed their hair every day if wishing to be preserved from a giddiness. But in regard to this use the charlatan was already abroad, for M. M. Tournefort, "chief botanist to the late French king," from whose *Compleat Herbal* I quote, goes on to say that combs were also very dexterously made of Willow, Pear-tree, Lime, etc., and "after they have polished them very well, they drop upon them a few drops of the oil of Rosemary or Spikenard, and thus those cunning varlets impose upon silly people."

John Rea closes the final chapter of his *Flora* with the mention of Rosemary, and writes of the rarer kinds as follows—"*Rosmarium Aureum*, Gilded Rosemary, differeth from the common kind in that the leaves are variously striped with yellow as if they were gilded with leaf-gold. *Rosmarium Argentem*, Silver Rosemary, hath smaller leaves than the last, finely marked, and striped with white or silver colour,

therefore so called; this is more rare than the former, and of more delight and beauty. The Gilded and Silvered Rosemaries are in the summer months in greatest beauty, and the more they are exposed to the sun the better they will be marked; they all flower in May, and are increased by setting the slips in March or the end of August."

Drayton, in his *Pastorals*, alludes to Rosemary—

> "He from his lass him Lavender hath sent,
> Showing her love, and doth requital crave;
> Him Rosemarie his sweetheart, whose intent
> Is that he her should in remembrance have."

The old Spanish proverb imputes another significance to Rosemary—

> "Who passeth by the Rosemarie,
> Nor heeds to pull a spray,
> For woman's love no care has he,
> Nor shall he have for aye."

Robert Chester, author of *Love's Martyr*, in the dialogue between the Phœnix and Nature sets down the virtues of Rosemary thus—

> "There's Rosmarie the Arabians justifie
> (Phisitions of exceeding perfect skill).
> It comforteth the braine and memory,
> And to the inward sense gives strength at will;
> The head with noble knowledge it doth fill;
> Conserves thereof restore the speech being lost,
> And makes a perfect tongue with little cost."

The familiar sixteenth-century lines give herb Rosemary's best known purport—

"Rosemary is for remembrance,
Between us day and night;
Wishing that I might always have
You present in my sight."

Moore refers to Rosemary as "the humble Rosemary"—

"Whose sweets so thanklessly are shed
To scent the desert and the dead."

Long ago Rosemary, gilded, was in vogue for use at bridals; and reference is also made by more than one of the old playwrights to the practice of dipping Rosemary boughs in perfume for ceremonial purposes —"Here is a strange alteration, for the Rosemary that was washt in sweet water to set out the bridal is now wet in tears to furnish her burial," writes Dekker; and, "Were the Rosemary branches dipped," says the Scornful Lady, speaking of marriage preparations in Beaumont and Fletcher's drama of that name. Herrick in his lines *To Rosemary and Baies* writes of gilded Rosemary—

"My wooing's ended: now my wedding's neere,
When gloves are given guilded be you there."

But for testimony to Rosemary's most exalted

qualities, supernatural qualities indeed, I must open among others a little brown, leather-bound, square and thick black-letter volume in my possession, entitled *The Garden of Health*, printed in the year 1633. *The Garden of Health* prescribes Rosemary as a remedy for one hundred and thirty-one ills that flesh or spirit is heir to. "To comfort the hearte, seethe Rosemary and the flowers with Rosewater and drink it." "To cleanse and comfort the braine, seethe it in white wine and receive up the fumes thereof at thy nose and mouth, and hold a cloth over the head." "Rosemary comforteth the braine, sinews, hearte and memory." "It is good against shaking and the palsy." "To withstand poison, make a barrel of the wood and drink all thy drink out of it, and no poison shall hurt thee." "For all griefs, seethe the flowers in water in a bag to one half and drink it." "Seethe it in white wine and wash thy face therewith to make it whole, clear, faire and ruddie." "Carry powder of the flower about thee to make thee merry, glad, gracious and well-beloved of all men." "Seethe the root in vinegar and wine, and let a thief wash his face therein, and he shall neither rob, steal, feare, nor fight any man." "Lay the flowers on thy bed to keep thee from all evil dreams."

When the author of *The Garden of Health* wrote,

much evidently was looked for from Rosemary. In deference, however, to the mystic qualities of the shrub, I venture to quarrel with the injunction to lay Rosemary on a bed. To do so would very likely keep away evil dreams, but sleep would likewise be wholly banished. Rosemary, for remembrance, can among all its virtues not possibly claim a place as an opiate. The white Poppies of forgetfulness are our best bed-linen, and the phial that Sleep carries in her hand she nightly replenishes with the sweet waters of the river that men call Lethe.

I, for one, will have no Rosemary about my bed, not one leaf, lest I lie awake through all the dark hours, and then the day following am put to the trouble of finding some excuse for blue marks below my eyes.

Rosemary flowers most profusely when set in the poorest soil, which attribute of the herb Rosemary, taken metaphorically, should regain for it in the regard of the poets the place that it once held. Rosemary is very fragrant, and retains its freshness long after gathering. Dear Rosemary, I have a great affection for you, and I will seal what I write to-day with the words of Ophelia — "There's Rosemary, that's for remembrance; *pray, love, remember.*" I

am glad that you also, as well as the Violets, did not wither when her father died. When a woman's father dies, it is well if there yet remains that which flowers on poor soil, and, long gathered, is fragrant still.

VIII.

I ALWAYS go in fear that Antony may marry some one dreadful, and that would be very bad for Antony, and rather bad for myself—an impossible sister-in-law would be a great nuisance. I never feel safe as to what may happen, and this is so particularly since poor Antony had a "cross in love." Any man, I think, is capable of doing almost anything in such ways. Men do not seem to see facts in regard to women which are patent to other women.

I am never afraid of Antony's opinion and mine clashing as to men. The men he labels "very good fellows" always prove such in the long run, and the men for whom he has little liking invariably sooner or later show themselves faulty. From the first I remember he had no inclination for the company of Professor Macgaloshes, who made himself so extraordinarily odious afterwards. My brother had always

said that though the Professor might know more than the Sphinx, he was wholly devoid of humour, and in consequence a possible danger to society. When Professor Macgaloshes believed that Antony had on some occasion made a joke turning him into ridicule he became most implacably vindictive. In fact, so strangely disagreeable did his conduct become that it quite "got upon" Antony's nerves. A vindictive Professor with whom one's work is entangled, bent on avenging a jest that never was made, is a most difficult quantity to deal with. It was vain for Antony to declare that he knew simply nothing of the matter, and that the first he had heard of it was from the irate imaginary victim's own lips. "A man capable of so vulgar and senseless a joke, sir, is also in my opinion capable of denying it," was Mr. Macgaloshes' reply, and it was hopeless to attempt to appease him. Then there was that horrid little wretch for whom Antony at first sight conceived an aversion, and in regard to whom, indeed, he was wholly right. When the creature was ill, out of charity I lent him books and was good-natured because he seemed friendless, with the result that he talked afterwards as if I had "compromised" him. The ridiculous and abominable toad.

I wish that Antony could as well discover the

nature of women as he does the nature of men. Frequently has he said to me, in reference to some blatantly foolish soul, "How is it that you do not see more of Mrs. or Miss ——" (whoever it may be), "she seems very pleasant," and this of some affected and transparently fulsome being who has stood before one of his drawings uttering such expressions as, "Oh, Mr. Hardacre, this really is a treat. How much the world does owe you, to be sure." It makes me so angry. I could not resist telling him that Clara St. Quentin, looking once at some sketches of his under the impression that they were mine, passed them over without a word of commendation; in fact, all she said was, as she closed the portfolio, "Do you ever think of taking lessons, Miss Hardacre?" Afterwards when, not knowing that she had seen them already, my brother showed them to her as his own, she spent an hour and fifteen minutes (for I looked at the clock) examining what she had previously turned over in ten seconds. "A feast of colour, a banquet of form," was the verdict with which at last she permitted me to wrench them from her and once again consign them to the more dignified oblivion of a drawer.

"What does that empty-headed woman mean by 'a banquet of form'?" I inquired of Antony, when

he had returned a few minutes later from escorting our visitor to the hall door.

Antony's face fell, and he appeared to be by no means gratified by the question. His tone betrayed a little irritation, as he asked—

"Do you not like Miss St. Quentin, Bethia? She seems very intelligent, and to have a great feeling for art."

"She has no feeling for art. She is just an arrant flirt, and nothing else," I cried (it was bad of me, but I really could not help it, I was so indignant. Antony is so simple, and it is really maddening to stand by and see him deceived). "She did not admire those drawings in the least whilst she believed that they were mine. All she then had to say on the subject was to inquire, as she shut up the portfolio, if I had ever thought of taking lessons."

"You women are very much down on one another," Antony answered. "I had supposed that you and Miss St. Quentin might have made friends."

Friends!

What strange notions men have, though I really do not think that in those ways the majority of men are quite as dense as is Antony. Just because he thinks so little of himself any silly blarneying woman can bring him to consider her charming. Clara St.

Quentin said to him once, "How unusually actual you are, Mr. Hardacre;" and though I no not believe that either of them had the ghost of an idea as to what she in reality meant, he was so much touched and flattered that for at least a fortnight afterwards I went in fear and trembling lest gratitude should induce him to propose to her.

* * * * * *

There is work for a garden nymph, I see. Pan should employ one to iron the crumples of the Poppy petals after folding them up so tightly as he does in the buds. I should be very indignant did my maid pack my pink crape gown into so small a compass, in comparison, as is the sage-green wallet from which the great double coral-hued Poppies that came to-day to me from the country are now emerging. Pan may suppose that the air takes the creases from the great Poppy petals, and so that it is of no moment if he crushes them into a small space or no. But there he is mistaken. The Poppy blossoms remain creased to the last, as I well know from trying to draw them.

Some very fair white Lupines came with the double Poppies from Arcady this morning, and also some Guelder Roses—Boule de Neige—and also some Honeysuckle, and various other flowers. The basket in which they travelled should have been labelled as

are wares of a different nature in the shops, "Best selected." Every blossom in the basket was in itself valuable for prettiness, and the whole correctly conveyed the impression that the gatherer was a flower-lover, not a gentleman earning a "living wage" by the culture of plants.

Of Poppies, Lyte in his Herbal writes very engagingly, but he strikes the note of warning under the heading of "The Danger." He states that "the use of Poppy is very evill and dangerous, and especially opium, the which taken excessively or too often applyed upon the flesh outwardly, or otherwise without good consideration and advisement, it will cause a man to sleep too much as though he had the lethargie, which is the forgetfull sicknesse, and bringeth foolish and doting fancies; it corrupteth the sense and understanding, bringeth the palsie, and, in fine, it killeth the bodie."

John Parkinson sets the double Poppies in his *Garden of Pleasant Flowers.* "Of Poppies," he writes, "there are a great many sorts, both wilde and tame, but because our garden doth entertain none but those of beauty and respect, I will only give you here a few double ones and leave the rest to a general survey. From what place," he goes on to say, "they have been first gathered naturally I cannot assure you,

but we have had them often and long time in our gardens" (the date of my copy of his lovely *Paradisus Terrestris* is 1629), "being sent from Italy and other places. The double wilde kind came from Constantinople, which whether it groweth near unto it or further off we cannot as yet tell. The general known name to all," he says, "is Papaver = Poppie; the several distinctions are according to their colour. Yet our English gentlewomen in some places call it by a by-name, Jone silver-pinne, Sub auditur, Fair without and foule within." Parkinson does not follow Lyte's example in telling of "the danger." Of the blossom's virtues only is it of which the *Garden of Pleasant Flowers* treats. "It is not unknown I suppose to any"—so the paragraph entitled "the virtues" runs—"that Poppie procureth sleep, for which cause it is wholly and only used, I think; but the water of the wilde Poppies, besides that it is of great use in pleurisies and rheumaticks or thinne distillation, is found by daily experience to be a soveraigne remedy against surfets."

The Compleat Florist, by the Sieur Louis Liger d'Auxerre, newly done into English from the French in the year 1706, gives the fable of Papaver and a moral. The fable opens as follows—"We are at a

loss to know certainly who were Papaver's father and mother; but we know he was of mean extraction, and had his first being in the Alps. This young man," the story-teller continues, "being not very wealthy, spent some short time in travelling up and down the fields and working for his bread. But afterwards obtaining another talent from Heaven, he quitted the exercise of the former in order to continue the latter. He was admirably well versed in the art of lulling people to sleep, though never so uneasy or troubled with watchings; and there being nothing that recovers such persons more than sleep when 'tis wanted, or that contributes more to the good plight of the body, Papaver was no sooner known to be so qualified than he was so crowded after that he did not know who to serve first. The young man was of a very mild temper, and not self-interested notwithstanding his poverty, but always ready to sacrifice himself to the service of those who employed him. Hence it came to pass that one day having used his utmost efforts to set a woman asleep that through obstinacy and a spirit of contradiction natural to her sex would still keep awake, notwithstanding that sleep was necessary for the recovery of her health, it came to pass, I say, that upon this occasion Papaver fell ill and died soon after. But the gods who take care of men and suffer

nothing to be lost that may contribute to the preservation of their bodies, turned Papaver into a flower that to this day retains his name; and to render him immortal in consideration of the service he had so freely done, ordered that in an oval pod that grows on the top of its stalk, after the flower is gone, there should be contained a seed possess'd of the virtue of making people sleep." To the fable the Sieur Louis Liger d'Auxerre fittingly appends a moral, worded as follows—"'Tis not always a high birth that leads us to immortality. Good manners joined to laudable actions will equally raise a man to it, let his extraction be what it may."

The moral is very refreshing.

IX.

THIS morning I seem wholly idealess. I will write, of course, for I have determined daily to do so, but what to write is a problem hard of solution. No notions present themselves, and the fact that the fire will not burn seems to overpower all other realities.

I have sometimes diverted myself by making my mind as blank and passive as possible, and then waiting to discover what vagrant fancies would flitter within the reflecting mirror's vista. I will follow this plan at present and see what I shall see, as the children say.

The first phantasm that presents itself is that of the Lady of Shalott—the word mirror, I imagine, the avenue by which the image floated to my thoughts—

> "Four grey walls and four grey towers
> Overlook a space of flowers,
> And the silent isle embowers
> The Lady of Shalott."

I feel sorry for the Lady of Shalott. The curse that was on her if she stayed to look down to Camelot made her weave always on, and on, and on, and she must have grown very weary of weaving, I am sure; and much I doubt that in her web she took as much delight as the poet states. It is just like a man to believe that a woman sitting alone working is perfectly happy and satisfied, and that were aught amiss she would most certainly say so. This is a comfortable creed held by nine men out of ten; but, being a woman, I think differently, and feel assured that the lines—

> "And so she weaveth steadily,
> And little other care hath she,"

falsely represent the state of things. Not only when the moon was overhead, but in the garish sunshine of day, was she half sick, and more than half, thoroughly, heart-brokenly sick, of shadows, I am convinced.

I wonder of what fabric was her mirror? Of glass, or of some burnished metal? A surface of silver or steel that had shown itself possessed, I suppose, of the attributes of a mirror. I imagine it as of polished silver.

Even in cities we are not indebted to quicksilvered glass alone for reflections. I have a liking for looking from the window to watch the traffic, and before

the carts and cabs and carriages are within my range of vision I can catch sight of their reflection in the window of a sombre little shop on the opposite side of the street. Truly it is a case of in "a glass darkly"; but yet I see with sufficient clearness to enable me to distinguish the cart from the cab, the hansom from the four-wheeler, the carriage drawn by one horse from that drawn by two, and even minute differences of various kinds. There is a certain fascination in watching the process by which the shadow is transformed into the substance, a fascination apart from the fact that the reflecting window-panes permit a further field of vision than would be possible without their aid. After dark, too, the sparks of light which, collectively seen from afar, resemble the flecks of fire in a nearly consumed scroll of paper, have their magic. Those flashing yellow gleams excite my fancy, and hours are shamefully wasted whilst I watch the spectacle that the street of an evening presents.

(I do not feel at all sure that pomposity does not come with writing, and that I am not beginning to possess the quality which I have said helps the pen, as well as all other instruments of occupation, so gaily on the way. A while ago and I saw no waste of my time in sitting with folded hands as I watched

the lights in the street. We doubtless acquire the defects of our qualities, and industry surely has its reverse side.)

The Lady of Shalott may be a pathetic creation, but not one of the most pathetic, I think, in modern literature. Lucy Ashton I would name as the player of the most pathetic part on the modern stage of fiction, and it is to me always a subject of wonder that Sir Walter Scott could so well realise feminine sentiment. A woman, when picturing the nature of other women, possesses the premise of her own heart and mind from which to draw conclusions. But to a man such aid is denied, and the insight that Lucy Ashton's portraiture betrays seems indeed almost an evidence of supernatural power. The Wizard of the North truly was a wizard.

I was saying something or other in reference to Lucy Ashton to Clara St. Quentin not long ago. Clara St. Quentin, apparently, considered the rôle assigned to Lucy Ashton an enviable one. "She had a great deal of experience," Clara rejoined. Certainly poor Lucy Ashton had "got her experience," and perhaps, though I was greatly disposed to laugh at the comment before her face, Clara had some reason in her craving for experience—a craving that seems never likely to be satisfied. Experience, however

much or little the process has hurt, gives assuredly that which is indelible. From stage to stage it is always proceeding: once the period shifts to another it is never returned to. As well ask a half-opened bud to return to its green folds, a full-blown Rose to close, as bid the spirit retrace its way to an earlier state. After what has been we cannot be the same again as before we were; and happily for our contentment, we, strangely enough, would mostly have it so; and this preference I sometimes think would hold good even with the Fall. I do not formulate a creed as to Adam, but I doubt that Eve after eating of the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge, would have annulled the deed had it been in her power to do so. The law of compensation is powerful. Was Adam beloved by her, and did he strive to comfort and shelter her, the calamity occasioning the need of his doing so could not have been without some alleviating circumstances in Eve's eyes. At least this would be so if the nature of her daughters is that which she transmitted to them. The love of Eve for Adam may have been strong before the Fall, but I think it was probably stronger after it. If Adam's affection for Eve increased or lessened when they had lost Paradise, as I am not a man I cannot form an opinion; but about Eve I am sure.

Pages from the Day-Book

OF ONE WHO RALLIED BEFORE THE END.

Out of the Greek.

RUDE Charon e'en, touched by such gentle grace,
Urged her not roughly from the embarking place;
And having almost put off from the shore,
Let her look back on those she loved once more.

OF THE NEW-FANGLED WOMAN.

(*By Antony, who has a detestation of the New-fangled Woman.*)

WHEN women in their rôle succeed,
To rival men they see no need:
When women fail as women, then
They think to try again as men.

TO A WILD RED ROSE.

VIVID as flames, those buds of thine
As tapers burn on summer's shrine.
Fairest Wild-Rose, methinks thou art
The garden Roses' soul and heart:
Of quite gross clay they seem to be,
Viewed by thy brave fragility.

X.

I SPOKE of the law of compensation yesterday. The law of compensation is doubtless far reaching, but it is, I think, a law that serves the unhallowed purpose of palliating much that is very inhuman.

If people desire to go untroubled by the consciousness of their neighbours' distress, they are apt to magnify a thousand-fold the law of compensation's powers. Many a time have I noticed the law of compensation playing the part of excuse for a lack of sympathy with suffering. "It is very sad for Julian or Julia, of course, but no doubt," &c. &c. "Nature adapts herself so wonderfully that," and so forth. Thus speak the willing believers in the consolatory laws. There are one or two persons of my acquaintance for whose victims I tremble when I hear reference made to the law of compensation. The allusion is surely the forerunner of some act of

selfish cruelty. I would have the knowledge of the two laws—the law of nature adapting herself, and the law of compensation—guarded jealously from all of those who are inclined to hard-heartedness and want of consideration for their fellows. There is another theory, of course holding good in many cases, that also I think engenders heartlessness in many more. This theory expresses itself in the words, "I should feel it terribly, but people are so different that," &c. &c. People are different of course. The compass of feeling is a vast one, but to take the wide limit of the gamut as evidence that you are probably scarcely sensible of that which would be agony to me, is a conclusion not conducive to kindly compassion. And then the wight never yet crossed my path who admitted him or herself wanting in the power of feeling. Sorry examples of the absence of sensibility among relations, friends, or acquaintances, have saddened most of us, doubtless; but no one ever yet, I imagine, detected such a shortcoming in the first person singular.

There are faults which humanity runs out to confess, whilst to others no mortal eagerly lays claim. I have known people climb to the house-top to announce their pride, but never any one who boasted in good faith of conceit or vanity. I have hearkened to confes-

sions of extravagance, but I was never yet a listener when parsimony was professed. A passionate hot temper I have heard owned to with satisfaction, and even a vindictive one; but it has not been my fate to hear a quarrelsome or meddlesome temper proclaimed. I do not quite know why it should be pleasant to avow oneself proud but not conceited, extravagant but not close-fisted, passionate but not quarrelsome, but so it seems to be. Nor are folk ashamed of professing themselves lazy, but my experience of confessions does not include one of either gluttony, deceit, or tale-bearing. "I am a dreadful coward," many a woman will say, and the appreciative smile with which the words are spoken invites the beholder to believe that the cowardice is of the nature of an attractive attribute.

I imagine that the faults of which human nature is prone to boast, are the defects of qualities with which it also credits itself. To own the defects of our qualities is a very different matter from publishing defects that cannot possibly be catalogued as the reverse sides of the shields of merit. When Sir Plume admits his extravagance, the extravagance presents itself to his eyes, very likely, as the outcome of an engaging generosity, an open-handed liberality. Ten to one it is that Amanda, while avowing herself

to be "horribly cowardly," looks upon the cowardice as the flower of a soft feminine nature, palpably at variance with that of those abominable women who lecture on platforms, wear frightful clothes, and make themselves and their fads ridiculous.

But, after all, who among us is perfectly just in the matter of his or her own merits and defects, or in the matter of his or her neighbours, either? It is not the enormity of the offence in most cases that adjusts the weight of our condemnation, but a thousand extenuating or prejudicial trifles of which we are scarcely conscious ourselves. The shortcomings of those for whom we have a passionate affection excite our tenderness as often as our wrath, and the imperfections of those who have passed away are hallowed too. She was irritable, poor darling, or proud—the thought of the failing is wrapped about with pity. As to the faults of those for whom, after the fashion of the Dr. Fell rhyme, we have no liking, does not the lack of love for the sinner increase a hundred-fold our abhorrence of the sin? If I dislike you, I will hate your faults virulently, and hate them in other people the more than I would otherwise because they are also yours. If "the Pink of Perfection" be for you my title, I take your failings as but exceptions proving the rule of your worth; and when the like failings

crop up in other mortals, I forgive the same the more easily because they are of a pattern with your own. We are most of us biased too hopelessly to free ourselves, and the only cure for the prepossession is, I take it, the waters of Lethe.

It is the habit of some minds ever to search for motives. The power of association brings this search, for difficulty and chance of failure, on a par with the proverbial looking for a needle in a bundle of hay. How can we commonly hope to hit upon the solution of the riddle, when our thoughts and our words and our deeds are affected by such remote and veiled-from-the-spectator influences as those that association brings to bear? I am particularly polite to a man or a woman because in some trick of speech, or some gesture or expression, I find a likeness to some one on whom perhaps the recipients of my civility never looked, of whom they may have never heard. The desire to hear Strephon's name will carry the infatuated Phillida a mile out of her way, and fire her fancy with a thousand imperative reasons for betaking herself where her wish may be gratified. Her interest in Corydon's conversation is lively, for is he not ever well informed as to Strephon's movements, and in constant communication with his friend? If Corydon ascribes an erroneous reason for Phillida's

sympathetic attention to his chatter, we cannot blame him. We would only draw his attention gently to the fact that the power of association's mechanism includes wheels within wheels.

I was told of an old man the other day, a gardener by trade, who so long as he is capable of crawling to the scene of his labours will be permitted to make havoc of the plot he should cultivate. His patron is a friend of mine. She lost her husband, to whom she was devoted, some years ago, and she gave me the reason for permitting the would-be tiller of the soil to work his ignorant way among the flowers and shrubs of the strip of ground to which in London we accord the courtesy title of "a garden."

"Why," I asked, "is he allowed to come and devastate?" (My friend had just told me that the man was really useless, in fact did far more harm than good with his spade and hoe.) "Oh, I shall always allow him to come," she answered. "Once, soon after ——'s death, when I was speaking to him about the garden, he said, apropos of something or other, 'The *master* liked it,' and so I shall let him come as long as he is able."

Of Bethia Hardacre

XI.

WHEN we reach the medicinal flower and herb literature of the early years of this century, we find the once highly extolled remedies treated with a sad diminution of respect. Turning over the pages just now of the *Edinburgh New Dispensatory*, and of Dr. Thornton's Herbal, I was truly shocked by the want of faith in the panaceas of an elder generation constantly proclaimed in these volumes. Agrimony, Bugloss, Betony, Dittany, Eyebright, Feverfew, Ladies-mantle, Meadow-Sweet, Tansy, Southernwood, of all of these old favourites the verdict of 1801 is either "Very little employed by regular practitioners," or (and this the most frequent) "Has no part now in the list of either the London or Edinburgh Colleges." Who can say, however, that this judgment may not be reversed once more with the revolving of Fortune's wheel? I am not sure in the case of Ladies-mantle

(*Alchemilla*) that the contemptuous sentence is not already revoked. And for the rest, perchance their day will come again. Agrimony, good against the spleen and old tertian agues; Betony, whose qualities rival the magic Hellebore's; Bugloss, great cordial herb, and good to exhilarate the spirits; Dittany, good against the sciatica; Eyebright, wonderful strengthener of sight; Feverfew, good against St. Anthony's fire and melancholy; Meadow-Sweet, good in fevers and tertian agues and malignant disorders; Tansy, curer of toothache, of contusions, and taker-off of freckles and sunburn; Southernwood, of sublite parts, pneumonic, hysteric, &c., I, your friend, bid you and many another herb and flower of obsolete medicinal value bide your time. You may not have very long to bide. Fortune's wheel turns fast. For myself, I know, I am prejudiced in your favour. The poet of the *Faerie Queene* carries me with him—

"Oh, who can tel
The hidden power of herbes and might of magick spel."

The unprejudiced, however, will allow that inquiring minds of old had the gift of somehow getting pretty frequently at facts, if the theories by which the facts were reached fail to accord with the discoveries of modern research.

Meanwhile I have not many on my side, and have wholly failed hitherto to find a druggist willing to work after the formula of the Herbals. In vain have I striven lately after an ointment decocted of Dock leaves. The dispensing chemists to whom I apply respond politely, but in place of hastening to supply me with what I demand, firmly offer a dozen new-fangled unguents, the name even of any one of which is sufficiently portentous to shake from his grave that respected friend of the earlier herbalists, John Tradescant. My stock of obstinacy is, however, sufficiently ample to carry me triumphantly through the flouts of the decadent druggists. A plaster of which the principle was Dock leaf would, I am convinced, do yeoman service in cases of irritation other than that provoked by Stinging Nettles.

Dr. Thornton displays a rather pretty humour at the expense, first, of the members of his own profession, and then at that of his patients, in a note affixed to a table showing to what names of the present (1814) Pharmacopeia the former names belong. He writes—

"We have given here the new names lately introduced into the latest London Pharmacopeia, also all the different appellations of colleges in order that the reader of our *Family Herbal* may know what changes have taken place in the medical nomenclature, and

not find himself at a loss to discover upon any occasion his old friends under a new mask; but we lament that such changes should ever take place; for it is immaterial to the patient whether he be ordered calomel or sub-muriate of Mercury; but it makes a great difference to him if the compound forms pills of oxi-muriate of Mercury, formerly called corrosive sublimate, from similarity of sound; so very advantageous is it to preserve the old accredited names. When chemicals and drugs were first sent out to India under the new names, the practitioners were at a loss to discover what they were, and it required another six months before the new nomenclature arrived. There is, however, this advantage in changing the names of the medicines; patients averse to Peruvian Bark take the Cinchona with pleasure; or those fearful of Calomel are ordered by the physician the submuriate of Mercury, without the prejudice of the party interfering."

The following receipts I owe to the compiler of *The Edinburgh New Dispensatory*—

"*Aqua Liliorum Convallium.*—To any quantity of these flowers four times their weight of water is to be added, and water drawn off by distillation in proportion to two pounds to each pound of the flowers."

"*Aqua Rosæ.*—Take of fresh petals of the Damask Rose, the white heels being cut off, six pounds; water sufficient to prevent an empyreuma. Draw off one gallon."

From the same source I also glean these general rules for the collection and preservation of simples—"Herbs should mostly be gathered when come to their full growth, and before the flowers unfold, and should be dried in the shade—excluded not from the sun's heat, but its light. Slow drying of them in a cool place is far from being of any advantage; both their colours and virtues are preserved in greatest perfection when they are dried hastily by the heat of the sun, or of a common fire as great as that which they can bear without being scorched, especially the more succulent which are otherwise liable to turn black." To exemplify the use of heat in drying herbs, reference is made to the treatment of tea among the Chinese. "Flowers," the writer goes on to state, "should be gathered when moderately expanded on a clear dry day before noon. Red Roses are taken before they are open, and the white heels clipped off and thrown away," and he adds the information that "the quick drying above recommended for leaves of plants is more particularly proper for flowers; in most of which both the colour and smell

are more perishable than in leaves, and more subject to be impaired by slow exsiccation."

In regard to barks the author of *The Edinburgh New Dispensatory* writes that, "it may be doubted whether barks are not generally more replete with medicinal matter in summer and spring than in winter. The barks of many trees are in summer so much loaded with resin and gum as to burst spontaneously and discharge their redundant quantity. It is said that the bark of the Oak answers best for the tanners at the time of the rising of the sap in spring, and as its use in tanning depends on the same astringent quality for which it is used in medicine, it should seem to be also fittest for medicinal purposes in the spring."

XII.

My cousin Julia tells me that what with my Herbals and behaviour generally, I should assuredly have been burnt as a witch had I lived long ago.

I have no doubt that many of the wise women were just as harmless amiable creatures as I am myself, with a taste for medicinal flower and herb lore, and a passion for observing signs and symbols. Some one said, I remember, when I was speaking the other day of witchcraft, that perhaps the most curious aspect of the matter was the witches' belief in their own occult power. It is very strange that the witches should have suffered burning rather than recant; but I think I can imagine the steps by which a sorcerer comes to believe in the necromancy. Magic seems to be a real power sometimes. I do not keep a Dream-book, but I confess that, remembering the dreams that foreran sundry events, I cannot pretend to be quite

without superstition in regard to the visions of the night.

As to dreams, of very long standing is the doctrine that morning dreams in particular come true, a doctrine of which, I admit, I am an upholder. In one of my old books dedicated in the year 1613 "to the Right Honourable the Lady Lettice, wife of the heroicall and Mars-like soldier, my Lord Chichester," this belief is authoritatively laid down in the chapter entitled "Of Dreams." "Dreams are either tokens of things past or significant of things to come. And surely, if a man's minde be free from cares and he dreams in the morning, there is no doubt but the affaires then dreamed of will truly come to pass."

I should suppose that the witches who came to believe in the might of their black art had appeared to others in the light of witches before they had accredited themselves with the power. And once we get a character of a particular complexion it is human nature's method to act the part assigned, as well as ingenuity permits. Had I lived when it was by no means unusual to be so characterized, Julia's words as to my witchcraft would have sunk deeply into my heart. Was I akin to the sorcerers? Were magical powers mine in truth? Could what she detected have no foundation but in her own thoughts? Did not I

feel at times strangely stirred and influenced? Surely my words have a fantastic trick of coming true. I should be on the high-road to witchhood instantly, and begging Antony to see about a black cat and a sugar-loaf hat for me before he dressed for dinner. And Antony is so good-natured that he would have hurried off to the current "co-operative" in hopes of getting the properties for me there and then. (As it is, I have half a mind to send out for a magic crystal and an ebony wand, and am noting with satisfaction that the flowers in the room include Sorcerer's Violets and Lunary.)

Certainly there is fascination in the notion of a power that waits not upon the matter-of-fact rules of life; and if the witches were burnt, poor things, perhaps they considered the game almost worth the candle. Better to die as the witches, with the comment "Convicta et combusta" against one's name in the Court-book, than live on as a Mrs. Goodall. Theirs had been no prosaic milk-and-water condition of existence, such as makes the world so uninteresting. For a witch who honestly held herself to be a witch there could be no dull moments, no hours of oppressive stagnation. Through fairy land's dominion her way lay, with all the wide realms of mysticism and magic as her territory. Listen to the words of the old

romance done into the vulgar tongue—"The damsel who carried Lancelot to the lake was a Fay, and in those times all those women were called Fays who had to do with enchantment and charms—and there were many of them then, principally in Great Britain —and knew the power and the virtues of stones, and of herbs, by which they were kept in youth and in beauty, and in great riches as they devised."

When I think over my friends and relations from the sorcerer or sorceress point of view, I cannot say that there are many suitable actors for the rôle. Our uncle, the Professor of all Philosophies, has maybe something of the wizard, and, perhaps, if I am witch-like it is from him that I inherit the attribute. But I know but one other man who has anything of the seer about him, and for the women I do not seem to find a single instance. I could not suspect of occult powers any of the people who come of an 'afternoon and leave cards. The weirdness of their behaviour or aspect is not the quality that has ever struck me. I wonder what the trait is in people that tends to make them seem possible witch and wizard? I cannot make up my mind on the subject: and I wish I could ask the oracles for enlightenment.

The existence of the Pythia with her thrice hallowed

tripod would certainly lend a charm to life, but I suppose the historical vapour would, in the present year of grace, win the opprobriously commonplace epithet—damp. Mrs. Goodall would on no account be induced, I am sure, to inhabit a dwelling in the oracles' proximity. Dread of the modern bug-bear, Damp, would now-a-days hinder the letting of houses and keep down the rents in the Delphic neighbourhood.

P.S.—I wonder why Apollo chose a woman for his mouthpiece. Women are not supposed to be as accurate as men. Were I to beg one of my male relations to tell me why the god chose a woman to reveal his prophecies, I should probably be informed that it was because a woman was sure to repeat whatever she heard, whilst a man might not have thought it worth while.

XIII.

IT always affords me a great deal of diversion when I can get together our uncle, the Professor of all Philosophies and Clara St. Quentin.

Clara St. Quentin, I must allow, certainly has staying power, and she has also an indomitable courage that no rebuffs can quench. Since we have known Clara, and our acquaintance now covers a period of a dozen years or more, she has never despaired of winning my uncle's approval and admiration. My uncle, unlike my brother Antony, is perfectly impervious to her attentions. As a rule, he makes no response whatever to her chatter, and if he does vouchsafe a reply it is usually of so caustic a nature as to fill me with the fear of Clara's really feeling herself crushed. But I need not dread such consequences, for she invariably greets the sarcasm with shrieks of delighted laughter and some such

exclamation as—"Oh, Professor Hardacre, how charmingly amusing you are. There is no one for dry humour like you, I am sure." I am sometimes not convinced that she does not prefer my uncle's company to Antony's; I am certain, at all events, that, though Antony may be speaking at the time, should my uncle open his lips she invariably hears what the latter says.

I see plainly enough that Antony, for all his amiability and good-nature, will never be set on a pinnacle and worshipped blindly as an idol. When he marries I have no doubt that he will be the adorer, not the adored. He is too explanatory, too tangible, to inspire an enthusiastic devotion. If he is vague, his vagueness has none of the mystery, the looming large in the distance touch, by which fancy is fired and kept ablaze. Rather his vagueness carries with it a hint of uncertainty, of the indecision which is suggestive of limitation, rather than of unbounded power. I always remember Julia's dictum on a subject akin to this. "If," she said, "the sex of the Will-o'-the-Wisp and of the Sphinx could be changed, the first would prove irresistible to all masterful men, the second to all imaginative women." I said to Antony once, "Antony, do not show your cards. You will never break a heart if you do." Antony laughed, and

promised, in consideration of the grievous consequence of disobedience, to strive after the obeying of my command. But if he has kept his word, I cannot say that so far his efforts have been crowned with success.

"I wonder why Professor Hardacre has never married?" is a question that Clara put to me the other day. "I am sure there must be some delightful romance to account for it. I am perfectly safe," she continued, "and you need not be afraid of its going further. Mamma always says, 'Clara is safe as the grave.' I am most scrupulous certainly in those ways. What can be more dishonourable than repeating confidences? Do let me hear all about it. I positively *long* to know, and no one sympathises more than I do with charming romantic episodes. They give such a zest to life."

My uncle truly is a source of never-failing interest to Clara. "What a dear, fascinating old thing the Professor is," was her comment when she last failed in her attempt to discuss with him the age of the world, and to parade her views on the subject of Religion *versus* Science. Her query, "Don't you think, Professor Hardacre, that some religious people are dreadfully narrow?" had proved in fact a valediction. My uncle did not leave the room, however, till he had carefully collected all the newspapers, with

the most plainly evident intention of carrying them off to read in a less perturbed spot.

"He really is a great dear," Clara went on, the door the while being scarcely closed on the subject of her laudation. "I *do* like clever people. When any one clever calls, Mamma says directly, 'We must send for Clara. She draws geniuses out famously.'"

"Clara St. Quentin has a faculty for drawing geniuses out famously," I said half-an-hour later. (My uncle, still carrying the newspapers, had returned to ask for a cup of tea, after carefully glancing round the room, from the vantage-ground of the threshold, to make sure that the visitor had really vanished.)

"Whose tests are at Miss St. Quentin's disposal for the identification of the characters?" he responded.

"You do not think the laboratory of her mind capable of supplying them?" I answered laughing.

"I am without data from which to draw conclusions," my uncle said, drawing a chair within the radius of the reading-lamp. "Miss St. Quentin's mind remains to me an unknown quantity."

During the morning of the day that followed, I received a note from Clara begging that Antony and I would go to her mother's house during the course of the afternoon. "And pray urge your uncle to come too," she wrote. "I am sure he won't refuse

me, and I would send him a separate note, but I feel he will not stand upon ceremony with such old friends. We quite, tell him, take his coming for granted, and have a most delightfully clever man to meet him. Some one who has been, I forget where, to find out, for one of the learned societies, all about the nesting or something of crocodiles. Your uncle will know all about it, of course. Say *I* ask him to come."

I informed my uncle that he was bidden to the tea-party, and that the bait was held out of a most delightfully clever man to meet him, who had been we did not quite know where to find out about the nesting of crocodiles.

My uncle showed some signs of amusement, but none of an inclination to avail himself of the proffered hospitality.

"Thank your friend," he said, "for her invitation, but tell her that two of a trade never agree."

I impute, I know not if truly or falsely, some Welsh blood to Clara; which imputation coming from me is perhaps tantamount to an aspersion. I have little liking for the race, and warmly thank the Swan of Avon for words which, whilst using to express precisely my own sentiments, I can label with that conveniently impersonal term—quotation—"Now I perceive the devil understands Welsh."

Of Bethia Hardacre

Clara St. Quentin really has a trait in common with Owen Glendower. "I can call spirits from the vasty deep," is a declaration quite in keeping with many a speech I have heard from her lips in regard to her superhuman power to charm. In that delightful retort of Henry Percy, surnamed Hotspur, we have a touch, I think, of the pawky humour of the north—

> "Why, so can I; or so can any man.
> But will they come, when you do call for them?"

* * * * * *

As to the jewel-lore for which I will make room now in my book, some is as old as the days of Pliny, other I take from the quaint pages of Nicholas Culpeper and Sir Hugh Plat.

The "diamant" (Michael Drayton's "King of Gemmes") has a property to frustrate the malicious effects of poison, to drive away madness and vain fevers that trouble and poison the mind. Emeralds refresh the sight, and worn in a ring mitigate vertigo and strengthen memory. Sapphires quicken the senses, help such as are bitten by venomous beast. Rubies resist pestilence, take away idle and foolish thoughts, and make men cheerful. Amethyst being worn makes men steady, quickens the wit, is profitable in hunting, and repels vapours from the head. Jacinth strengthens the heart being beaten

into powder and taken inwardly or only worn in a ring. Jasper resists fevers. Topaz if you put it into boiling water so cools it that you may presently put your hand in without harm; and inflammation likewise may be cooled by its touch. Agate is efficacious against the sting of serpents. In malachite lies a counter-charm to poisons, witchcrafts, and sorceries. Lapis lazuli disperses melancholy being taken; outwardly worn as a jewel it makes the wearer cheerful, fortunate, and rich.

This morning I saw a very large lump of lapis lazuli offered in a shop for the modest sum of half-a-crown. I will go and buy it, I think. Remembering the stone's magical properties, it would be foolish not.

Turning over the pages of Pliny's *Natural History*, I came just now upon this statement concerning the colour yellow—"As touching yellow, I find that it is a most ancient colour and highly reputed of old times; for the wedding veil which the bride wears on her marrying day was all of yellow, and women only were permitted to use them, which might well be the cause that the colour is not reckoned among those that be principal, that is to say, common as well to men as women." Perhaps the present ascendency of yellow is a natural sequence of the tide of things feminine which is now flooding the world.

XIV.

IT is growing quite late, and I have not yet written a word. I have spent some time out of doors, and also in drawing Pansies and then colouring the drawing; and the Pansies showed such signs of fatigue that I could not leave them to take up the occupation later on. The sitting seemed to tire the flowers, and they lost their crispness and fell into limp, die-away attitudes very soon.

This afternoon I went to a house on the Chelsea Embankment, the balcony of which overlooks the river. "Sweet Thames" was running very softly, and no wonder. The heavy burden of freight must slow the pace, and the freight—steamboats and barges—seemed very heavy to-day. I asked my friend, the owner of the house, if the sunsets were now visible from the balcony, the outlook of which is south-west. "No," she answered, "the sunsets have passed too far north

to be visible." For four months, she said, the sunsets would be out of sight, at the end of which time she would see them again. It will not be till the end of September, then, that the sunsets will return. I also, if I go away, shall come back then, I suppose; and, also, like the sunsets, it will be from the north I shall come. It is ingenious of the sunsets to manage to go north during the four coming months, and to come back again when they do. They must go, I think, to kindle the Heather blossom, and by the returning time the radiance of the Heather will have gone. Were it verse I were now writing in place of the prose with which it is my pleasure to blot fair paper, I would attempt to twist into a rhyme the notion of the sunsets' crimson and purple torch kindling the Heather-fire of the northern moors. But I am too lazy to think the doing of this worth the trouble. The conceit would serve best for a child's fairy story, I think. When I was a child the thought of the sun's setting further and further north till it reached the Scottish Heather's kindling point, would have appealed to my fancy.

I will send the imagining to my small niece in a letter—

"Would you know, Letty, why the sun now sets so far north? Further and further north now every

night. I will tell you the reason why. The sun kindles the Heather that you have seen on the moors. Do you remember how brilliant last autumn the Heather was?—how it shone and gleamed as brightly as the beams that come through the purple and crimson stained glass windows in church, when the light without is very strong? Every evening when the Heather is at its brightest, it is re-charged by the sun, and the people say, 'How lovely the Heather is.' 'How glorious the hills look.' But at last a sad evening comes when the setting sun cannot journey quite far enough to perform the task, and on that evening is it that the Heather first begins to fade. And evening after evening, being never re-kindled, the light fails, and fails till it is wholly out; and then the moor grows dark; darker, and darker, and darker, till it is almost black."

No, on second thoughts, I will not make this over to Letty. It would only serve to depress her. She is a child formed sufficiently on the lines of my own childhood's mould to be made miserable in this fashion. I should have acutely felt the melancholy of the diminishing brilliance of the northern Heather, because the sunsets no longer came far enough to recharge the flowers of the moor. "Could not the sunsets have still come if they had *tried?*" I should

have eagerly asked the teller of the story. If the teller had answered "No," I could not have endured the idea with fortitude. Melancholy is so intolerable to a child, and a child is so very quick to sympathise with the suffering caused by being left alone, forsaken, deserted.

A little girl was staying in an hotel in Scotland last autumn when I was also sojourning there. She was a delicate child, and her kith and kin left her at home when, on sightseeing quest bent, they drove long distances and were abroad many hours at a time. On these occasions it fell in with her humour to sit with me, and I soon learnt the unquenchable nature of her story thirst. Once, when I had come to the end of my powers of invention, I turned to stories got from books. I told her, willingly enough, several of Hans Andersen's fairy stories, and then as she still demanded more and more, I said, "Have you ever heard the story of Argos?"

She had never heard the story of Argos, and so I told it as it is told in that prose translation of the *Odyssey*, for the which we are in debt to Professor Butcher and Mr. Andrew Lang—

"And lo, a hound raised up his head and pricked his ears, even where he lay, Argos the hound of Odysseus, of the hardy heart. . . . There lay the

dog Argos. . . . Yet even now when he was ware of Odysseus standing by, he wagged his tail and dropped both his ears, but nearer to his master he had not now the strength to draw." And I told of the answer of Eumaeus the swineherd to Odysseus, who, seeing the dog, had looked aside and wiped away a tear. "In very truth, this is the dog of a man that has died in a far land. If he were what once he was in limb and in the feats of the chase when Odysseus left him to go to Troy, soon wouldst thou marvel at the sight of his swiftness and his strength. There was no beast that could flee from him in the deep places of the wood when he was in pursuit,—for ever on a track he was the keenest hound. But now he is holden in an evil case, and his lord hath perished far from his own country, and the careless women take no charge of him." And I told of how therewith Odysseus and Eumaeus went straight to the hall within. "But upon Argos came the fate of black death, even in the hour that he beheld Odysseus again."

It was very stupid of me to tell it to the child, and I was sorry when it was too late. Words cannot be much sadder than the words, "In very truth, this is the dog of a man that has died in a far land." When I had finished I saw that tears were in her eyes.

She rose up from the seat at my side, and stamped her foot with a gesture of passionate emotion.

"How *I hate* such sad stories," she cried; a fury of impatience and distress in her tone.

Presently she grew quiet again, and resting her clasped hands upon my knee, she looked up at me confidingly and said, "What I like are stories that begin ever so sadly and end, oh so happily."

"Dear, you are right," I said; "those stories are far the best."

I have often thought of the child since. I have had no news of her, and it is not likely that I ever shall. For her people I had no fancy; they were boisterous and aggressive rather, and not, in old nurse's language, "prettily behaved." She was a fragile, fanciful little creature, and seemed of a far more finely-tempered flesh and blood than did the stock of which she came. I hope her own story will end, as she would say, "oh so happily"; but the qualities in her that touched me were not those that, as a rule, conduce to the smoothing for their possessor of this world's rough ways. It is always with a feeling of sadness and apprehension of what life may bring to her that I think of the child. But she was very delicate, and so perhaps I trouble myself on her behalf in vain.

Of Bethia Hardacre

DEDICATORY LINES.

To thee I give all I have written here,
  Whate'er it be, however poorly writ;
Nor in the giving have I any fear,
  For thou wilt take as I do render it:
Not for a fancied worth, but as from me
Who, giving this, gives more than this to thee.

FROM A DRYAD

(*When asked to come South*).

I COULD not live in verdant groves
  Of lowland Elm and Lime,
Where golden freight of harvest proves
  The wealth of southern clime.
O'er moors that purple Heather floods,
  By rocks with Wild Thyme lit,
Through ebony and silver woods
  Of Pine and Birch I flit.

My feet those meadows could not press
  Where Bluebells do not spring,
Where Pansies (Love-in-idleness)
  Give no gay garlanding.
The song of languid streams to me
  A message is unknown,
I only love the melody
  Shrined in quick water's tone.

MADRIGAL.

THE past is as a Rose,
Whose faded petals are for ever sweet,
And doth in death disclose
A fragrance meet
To perfume the still chamber where
A heart holds all most sweet, most fair.
And Time's own hand made fast
The casement, long ago,
Against sad autumn's blast,
Chill winter's snow;
And so the present cannot enter now
And steal its sweetness from that Rose
The past.

XV.

THE flowers in Arcady are succeeding each other quickly. This morning some great orange Poppies came from the country, and the Roses are already in blossom, and the white Lilies are beginning to blow. Still the Pink-Thorn and the Solomon's Seal and the Columbines remain, and the Irises are magnificent. Some very pretty yellow Irises were among the flowers that came to me this morning, and some very pretty pale pink Columbines too. If I were well enough I would draw their portraits. The pale pink Columbines look very attractive, I see, with the golden Irises and also with the Laburnum; and another very pleasant nosegay consists of orange Poppies and white Columbines.

In my old Spanish Herbal I have pictures of a great many Columbines. Columbines and Jonquils of all sorts seem to have grown wild in great profusion in Spain, the native place too of Rosemary and

Lavender. There are pages and pages of Narcissi, no two alike in the book, and there are a great many prints of Hyacinths as well. The herbalist who made the collection did not live to publish the book. He died comparatively young, having shortened his life by the hardships he endured during the journeys upon which he went to collect plants. The volume opens with a portrait of the Spanish herbalist. The face is of the ascetic type, not unlike the representations of Fra Angelico. (The angelic friar must have had an affection for flowers too. Without it he could not have painted them as he did.) How far-reaching and minute the results of human efforts and labours are. I think of that when, as I often do, I turn over the pages of the Spanish Herbal and admire the drawings it contains. That eager and patient botanist who died two hundred years ago was the author of a great deal of pleasure. The book with the lovely illustrations of flowers must during the course of two hundred years have given a vast amount of enjoyment, and my copy is in excellent preservation, and will still, I hope, afford delight for a long while after I am gone.

When I am dead, I should not like my Herbals to belong to any one who had no love for them. They give to me the impression of having been compiled with so much affection for the subject. It would

seem to me cruel to the herbalists to treat with neglect or want of appreciation the fruit of their industry, and devotion to the things of nature. The flowers that came to me from the country this morning inspire me with the same sentiment. They are flowers from the garden of some one who died quite lately. I never saw her, but I hear that she was very fond of her garden, and cherished it to the last. The flowers that she cannot see give me the feeling that do motherless children, and I should put them in a place of honour in the room were they not as pretty as they are.

It always touches me to see that which has won the affection of any one who has gone. I feel as if in such a case what is inanimate may have a "moan" into which the "wise world" might look and mock—

> "Lest the wise world should look into your moan,
> And mock you with me after I am gone."

Excepting the sonnet that begins—

> "That time of year thou may'st in me behold,"

I think the one, the concluding lines of which I have just quoted, is the most affecting that Shakespeare ever wrote.

* * * * * *

I read lately a paper on colour suggestion—the colours suggested by the letters of the alphabet. I

cannot say that letters are to me suggestive of hue with the exception of "Z," which always impresses me as black. The letters have certain other attributes to me, though. "Z," besides its swarthiness, has to me a sinister air. "I," in my eyes, wears a furtive appearance, and "A" a most benign aspect. I believe that in the book in which I learnt to read, "a" stood for amiable, which perhaps accounts for the character my mind still ascribes to it; and certainly "B" always "bounces" for me. "Little a, big A, bouncing B," the nursery rhyme ran. C always has a slender mien in my fancy—an elegant creature, as old-fashioned people would say; D, a sullen air in the capitals, V a modish one, and Q the suggestion of wit. G and H impress me as yeomen but fit to serve the elegant C, the fine Madam V, and the sparkling, whimsical Q. Such are the order of ideas that the letters suggest to me; not hue, with the exception of the sable of "Z."

I have a great liking for the effect of some words in print. Silver and crystal are both attractive words to view, I think; so are cedar and cedarn, lattice and missal; and the word pavement is, though I cannot say why, attractive to me. Purfled (embroidered with gold thread) is another of the words that I admire, and so are Cypress and Cyprus-lawn, and scarlet,

starry, chaplet, garland, and be-diamonded, which last word Mr. Stevenson sets on a page of his *Underwoods* to the beautifying of that page, in my opinion. Emblazoned gives pompous magnificence to a line of print, I think; and Milton's "flowery kirtled" pale delicacy. Ivory pleases me printed, and so do jacinth, and ebony, and coronation, which last wins also esteem, I take it, from its flower significance—Carnations being the descendants of Elizabethan Coronations. Pomander I consider to be a most decorative word, and in the same category I set Provence and corridor, madrigal and lute, lyre and constellation. As words of a bedizening character I see incense, arras, and peacock, daïs, damask, damascene, flambeau, and flamboyant. Context is not needed. The paper scroll is bedecked, with no aid but the word's own, with the colour and pomp of a mediæval pageant or Indian ceremony of State. These are but a few that at the moment occur to me out of an abundant stock, the sight of which, set on paper, adorn and give it brilliancy and sparkle in my eyes. Other words look frightful to me, or overpoweringly dead-alive. Crate, adult, warehouse, and cautious are among these. They are all of very plain appearance, and in keeping with rep-covered furniture, oil-cloth, and Mrs. Goodall.

XVI.

ROGER'S home is far away from London. It is far away from the noisy streets, and the uproar and the din, and the everybody-wanting-something atmosphere.

Roger's home is in Arabia—Arabia being another name for a Highland region encircled by some of the loveliest of Highland hills, and threaded by some of the loveliest of Highland streams. It seems a long way now to Arabia, and it seems a long while since the time of last year when the Heather on the Arabian hills was so very purple, and the Corn in the valley looked so very golden in the misty light of a still autumn afternoon. An afternoon during which I was alone; for Antony was making the ascent of Schiehallion, and my sister and the child had not yet come north. Roger, who is a nondescript white dog, sat during that afternoon by the door-step of the house, in an upper chamber of which I lay upon a horsehair

sofa that had been drawn up into the bow window to enable me to see from there the prospect. And certainly the prospect was worth seeing. Moorlands purple with Heather above, a valley golden with Corn below; and the pleasant harvest work, the cutting and the tying into sheaves of the Corn, to give reality to a scene of purple and gold that was almost fairy-like, viewed through the soft gossamer of silver and saffron haze. And the women who were helping to get the harvest in had attired themselves most fittingly for their places in the picture. The flash of light pink, and of lilac, and pale greeny blue, might on nearer inspection be but the veriest rough bodice of any every-day "print" gown. The skirts of dusky hue might owe their soft darkness to stain, tatter, and darn. But through the wonderful mist, that was neither yellow nor white, the sparkles of pink, of turquoise blue, of lilac, as they caught the light when the wearers moved, were the most harmonious colours possible; set in that mystic glow shot through with the purple of the Heather and the golden radiance of the Corn.

Being unfit for active service, I lay on the horse-hair sofa, from which the pillows slipped continually, and, turning from the contemplation of the landscape, I saw Roger in the position that he had taken up on

the road below. "He has a very nice face," I thought; and so when by and by the owner of the house came in and asked, as was her wont, if there was anything that she could give me or do for me, I said I would like to see Roger, if he would come up-stairs. The owner of the house did not answer for a moment. She stooped and brushed away a thread of cotton that was clinging to her black gown. Then she said —"Roger will not come up the stairs. When his master was ill, Roger used to come every day to his master's room to see him. The old dog is very faithful, and since the day that his master died he will not come up the stairs."

Now it is five years since Roger's master died.

There had been the sound of tears in the voice of the owner of the house as she spoke. For a minute or two I did not make any reply, but turned (for the sofa still stood in the window, though it was late in the evening then, and dark) and looked up at the stars. The stars were very bright. The stars in Arabia always seem bright, and the rainbows are very vivid there. "I thought he had a very nice face," I said presently. It was just after Cardinal Newman's death, and Cardinal Newman's motto, "*Cor ad cor loquitur*" came, for some reason or other, into my head.

Of Bethia Hardacre

The house-door by which Roger, with a patient look on his face, waits, is but a stone-throw from the churchyard where all that was mortal of his master lies. I wonder how much he knows, and how little? Does he know as much or as little, I wonder, as we most of us know about what is nearest to us really? He cannot, perhaps, know much less.

I heard from Arabia the other day. The owner of the house in Arabia wrote and said—"The old dog is going on in the same way, but he is growing stiff now." I shall be glad when it is over for Roger, and I believe that when this, whatever it is that we call life, is over, so faithful a creature will somehow or other be again with his master at last.

XVII.

I HAVE rather a fancy for the task of compiling a dictionary of obsolete flower names. Obsolete, and, also to quote John Parkinson, "by-names." To my mind many of the old names are very attractive, and their forgetting seems a pity. In some cases they are landmarks, and in others they tell of medicinal qualities formerly attributed to the plants, and again in others they record history. I will set some down to-day as they occur to me. They but form a meagre collection from the goodly number to be found in the pages of Flower-books published in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

Honesty = Moon-wort, Silver-plate, White Satin-flower Money-wort flower, Penny flower, Lunary, Prick-song-wort.

Love lies bleeding (Amaranthus) = Flower Gentle, Purple velvet flower, Passe velour.

Marvel of Peru = Flower of the night, Marvel of the world.

Sweet Sultan = Sultan's flower.

Snapdragon = Lion's mouth, Snap-lion.

Meadow-Sweet = Bride-wort, Queen-of-the-Meadow.

Snowdrop = Bulbous Violet, Theophrastus' Violet.

Rocket = Dame Violets, Levant stock gilliflower.

Agrimony = Achilles' yellow, Wound-wort.

Pansy = Kiss me ere I rise, Herb Trinity, Love in Idleness, Cull me to you, Three faces under a hood, Flower of love.

Lettice = Sleep-wort.

Sow-thistle seed = St. Mary's seed, Sow-thistle = Hare's cole-wort.

Cowslip = Herb Peter, Petty mullein, Paigles, Palsie-wort, St. Peter's-wort, Herb Paralysis.

Daffodil = Crowbells.

Betony = Bishop's-wort.

Strawberry = Freiser.

St. John's-wort = Grace of God, Hedge Hyssop.

Moly = Lily-leek.

Bindweed = Withy wind.

Wild hemp = Holy rope.

Columbine = Cock's foot, Culver-wort, Pigeon's grass.

White Lily = Juno's rose.

Willow herb = The Willow flower.

Fritillary = Ginny hen flower, Checkered lily, Snake's head.

Wild Hyacinth = English Jacinth, Harebells.

Crocus = The Son before the Father.

Iris = Flower-de-luce; White Iris = Fane.

Arum = Starch-wort, Wake Robin, Calf's foot, Cuckow pint, Friar's cowl.

Periwinkle = Sorcerer's Violet.

Anemone = Pasque-flower, Wind-flower.

Hepatica = Noble liver-wort.

Auricula = Bear's ear.

Grass of Parnassus = White liver-wort.

Groundsell = Ground-will.

Wild Campion = Hare eyes, Robin in the hose.

Martagon Lily = Herb of Mars.

Nightshade = Hound-berry.

Stonecrop = Jack of the buttery.

Great House-leek = Jupiter's beard, Herb Aloe.

Clary = Jupiter's distaff.

Asphodel = King's spears.

Solomon's seal = White-root, Ladder to Heaven.

Larkspur = Knight's-spur, Lark's-claw, Lark's-heel.

Black Bryony = Lady's seal.

Wild Bugloss = Lang-de-beef.

Cat's tail = Lance for a lad, Fig bean.

Catch fly = Lime-wort.

Hawthorn = Londoner's Maybush.

Alchemilla = Lady's mantle, Lion's-foot, Pade lion.

Hollyhock = Outlandish Rose.

Water fern = Osmund the Waterman.

Wild Thyme = Pellamountaine.

Pimpernel = Way-wort.

Garlic = Poor man's treacle.

Wood sorrel = Alleluya, Cuckow meat.

Great Bulrushes = Bumbles.

Knap weed = Bull weed.

Wild Red Poppy = Corn Rose.

Self-heal = Carpenter's-wort.

Shepherd's purse = Troy-wort, Shepherd's pouch, Case weed, Poor man's parmacity.

Black Hellebore = Christ's-wort, Christmas-wort.

Tulip = Dalmatian cap.

Crane's bill = Dove's foot, Gratia Dei.

Filbert = Filbeard.

Toad-stool = Fusse Ball, Wolf's fist.

Orchis = Fool stones.

Raspberry = Hindberry, Framboise, Raspis.

Rosemary = Gardrobe, Incense-wort.

Rose Campian = Gardener's delight.

Guelder Rose = Elder Rose.

White Thorn = Christ's Thorn, Garland Thorn.

Ground Ivy = Gill Creep-by-the-ground.

Tragopogon = Goat's beard, Go-to-bed-at-noon.

Rag-wort = St. James'-wort.

English Mercury = Good King Henry, Tap-wort, Allgood.

Sycamore tree = Pharaoh's Fig-tree.

Wallflower = Bee-flower, Wall Gilliflower.

Nasturtium = Yellow Lark's-heel, Indian Cress.

Aster = Star-wort.

Carnations = Coronations, July flowers.

Thrift = Our Ladies' cushion, Sea cushion.

Sweet William = Sweet John, London Tuft.

Daisy = Herb Margaret, White-gold.

Lily of the valley = Lily Convally, May-blossom.

Gentian = Fell-wort, Bitter-wort, Soap-wort, Bruise-wort.

Canterbury Bell = Steeple bell-flower, Bell-flower, Cardinal-flower, Throat-wort, Mercury's violets.

Convolvulus Major = Blue Bind-weed.

Vervain = Holy herb, Juno's tears.

Cardamine = Cuckow-flower, Lady's smock, Bitter cress.

All-heal = Clown's wound-wort.

Dittander = Pepper-wort.

Clematis = Burning climber, Virgin's bower, Ladies' bower.

Forget-me-not = Scorpion grass.

Lilac = Blue Pipe-tree.

Syringa = White Pipe-tree.

Privet = Prim Print.

Sweetbriar = Eglantine.

Valerian = Setwell, Jacob's ladder, Capon's tail.

Marigold = Rud's gold, Rudds.

Angelica = Root of the Holy Ghost.

Service tree = Quicken tree.

Hog's fennel = Sulphur-wort.

Mullein = Lung-wort, Woollen, Torch, Hare's beard, Peter's staff, High taper.

Foxglove = Finger-flower, Bell-flower, Thimble-wort.

Dock = Patience, Monk's rhubarb.

Double Poppy = Joan Silverpin.

Wayfaring tree = Pliant tree.

Lychnis chalcedonica = Nonsuch, Flower of Constantinople, Flower of Bristow.

Rue = Herb grace.

"Farewell, dear flowers, sweetly your time ye spent;
Fit, while ye lived, for smell or ornament."

Pages from the Day-Book

The saintly George Herbert had a love for flowers.

* * * * * *

Sad it is how nearly the language has cast out the good old word wort (wyrt = herba), once so common to English. Did I not live in a glass house I would with pleasure fling a stone or two at the language. The evil habit of letting the native store of significant direct words die of inertia, and of borrowing from the foreigner is going on apace. We have lost much and are losing more. No wonder. Is this not an age of tinned peas taking precedence of broad beans, of silver-plated metal preferred to honest pewter? It follows naturally enough that excellent words redolent of the soil are discarded for the sake of aliens. The stalwart *manship* is now wholly obsolete, ousted by the foppish *humanity*.

XVIII.

IT is very evident that the connecting link between poetry and pessimism is of recent forging.

I was looking yesterday into *The Compleat Gentleman*, by Henry Peacham, and there I find a delightful proof of the advantages to be derived from the poet's trade. "What other thing," he asks, "gave an edge to the valour of our ancient Britons, but their bards?" Statements of the most encouraging import, however, are those penned in reference to the Telesilla. "Moreover," says he, "the Muse, mirth, grace, and perfect health have ever an affinity each with the other. I remember Plutarch telleth us of Telesilla, a noble and brave lady who, being dangerously sick and imagined past recovery, was by the Oracle advised to apply her mind to the Muse and Poetry, which she diligently observing, recovered in a short space, and withall grew so sprightly courageous, that having well

fortified Argos with divers companies of women, only herself with her companies sallying out entertained Cliomenes, King of the Lacedaemonians, with such a camisada that he was fain to show his back."

Mr. Henry Peacham was an enthusiastic admirer of the poetic craft. He gives the following story, told in all seriousness too, as proof of the high esteem in which the "Darlings of the Muses" rightly may be held. "The Lady Anne of Britaigne, who was twice French Queen, passing through the presence in the Court of France, espying Chartier, the King's Secretary and a famous poet, leaning upon his elbow at a table's end fast asleep, she, stooping down and openly kissing him, said—'We must honour with our kisse the mouth from whence so many sweet verses and golden poems have proceeded.'"

A good deal of entertainment is to be had from the pages of *The Compleat Gentleman.* The edition of which I own a copy is the third impression, and was printed at the sign of the Cross Keys at St. Paul's Gate in the year 1661. The instructions for drawing and colouring are amusing to read, and the author furnishes examples of the difficulties he has himself experienced in the pursuit of the art. "I was not long since extremely troubled," he confesses, "with a piece of the Sea-Nymphs, being all sisters, in whose

faces I was to express a singular and several beauty, yet so like one another that they might be known to be sisters." He records also the fact that he has often taken a likeness of the king whilst sitting at dinner or talking with his followers. He wonders why among so many portraits of his Majesty he finds none true to nature, "or that did anything near resemble him"; and he speaks of two deviations from the truth on the score of which he quarrels with all the portraits of Charles. The one error he writes of as lying in the rendering of the complexion and the hair, "the other in the mouth, which commonly they draw with a full and great nether lip very apparent, wherein they commit the chiefest error." A table of beasts is printed; those most difficult to represent being given and catalogued first, and then those that are easier.

"Beasts more hard to be drawn for their shape and action—

"The Lion	The Hiena
„ Horse	„ Leopard
„ Rhinoceros	„ Ownce
„ Unicorn	„ Tiger
„ Stag	„ Panther
„ Lucirn	„ Ape"
„ Greyhound	

The others "more easy" include:—

"The Elephant	The Wolf
„ Dromedary	„ Fox
„ Camel	„ Cow
„ Bear	„ Otter
„ Asse	„ Hare
„ Hog	„ Coney
„ Sheep	All manner of
„ Badger	rough and shag-
„ Porcupine	hair dogs."

To the painting of flowers the master does not attach much importance. "For flowers, flyes, and such like," he says, "I will leave them (being things of small moment) to your discretion, counselling you at your leisure, when you walk abroad into the fields, to gather and keep them in little boxes until you have occasion to use them. To draw a flower, begin it *ab umbone* or the bosse in the midst (as in a Rose or Marigold there is a yellow tuft), which being first made, draw your lines equally from thence to the line of your compass, which you are the first to give, and then the worst is past."

Thanks to *The Compleat Gentleman* I have also acquired the knowledge needed for the due representation of the Gods, Pan and the Satyrs, the Nymphs, the Muses, the twelve months of the year,

the Heroes, Heroines, Vices, Passions, Arts, &c. &c. I have learned to portray Jupiter's hair as black, long, and curled ; and Mercury's as yellow. Sleep I know must wear a white mantle cast over with black ; Cupid a green robe ; Vesta, daughter of Saturn, white garments filled with flames. I think not to render Venus otherwise than with gold yellow hair, attired with black ; nor Queen Elizabeth but with pale face, grey eyes, and yellow hair. In depicting Emperors of Germany I run no risk of straying from the orthodox violet-coloured cloaks, or those of watchet or light colours. Danish gentlemen, in future, must be content, so far as I am concerned, to sport motley, "such as we make cloak bags of" ; whilst my Italians shall invariably put on black. Arithmetic will, whilst I clothe her, go in cloth of gold ; Geometry perforce be of a sad countenance and clad in green mantle fringed with silver. For Theory a watchet robe only I hold permissible ; for Practice one of tawney. The garments of Charity needs be yellow ; those of Liberty white ; of Laughter, several colours. For Wit, a discoloured mantle I believe compulsory ; for Government, a suit of armour. Opinion can but don raiment of black velvet, a black cap, and a white fall. For a portraiture of a thief, a dark-flaxenish hair and sunburnt complexion I am perfectly aware are requisite.

Mr. Peacham's rules for the drawing of "the Nymphes in generall" would really be productive of very engaging creations. Who would not gladly behold the Nymphs of the mountains "of a sweet and gracious aspect, in mantles of green girded about them, upon their heads garlands of Honeysuckle, Woodbine, Wild-roses, Sweet Marjoram or the like," dancing in a ring, composing a garland or gathering flowers? The Dryads and Hamadryads too—of a browner complexion than their cousins, their hair thick like moss, their garments green—would they be without fascination? A heart of stone only could fail to welcome the Muses, imagined as here they be. Clio with her garland of Bays; Euterpe with a wreath of sweet flowers and sundry wind-instruments; Thalia garlanded with Ivy, her mask and mantle of carnation, embroidered with silver; Melpomene with her sceptre and crown, "other sceptres and crowns lying at her feet," her pall or mantle of changeable crimson, her black buskins of silver, with carnation, black and white ribands, her "tragick pantofles of red velvet and gold beset with pearls and sparkes of rubies;" Polymnia clad all in white, her gold hair falling loose about her shoulders, her coronet of richest and rarest jewels intermixed with sweet flowers, in her left hand a book, upon whose outside shall be written "Suadere;"

Erato, of a sweet and lovely countenance, her temples girt with Myrtle and Roses, bearing a heart with an ivory key, by her side a pretty Cupid, winged; Terpsichore, of a merry countenance, playing upon some instrument, wearing a "coronet of feathers of sundry colours, but especially those green feathers of the Poppinjay in token of that victory which the Muses got of the Syrens" (the which Sirens turning to poppinjays or wood-peckers, as is well known); Urania, in her robe of the blue of the heavens, upon her head a crown of stars, in her hand a globe representing the celestial spheres; Calliope to be painted "richest of all the rest, upon her head a coronet of gold, as queen of her fellows; upon her left arm many garlands of Bayes, in store for the reward of poets; in her right hand three books whose titles may be Illiadeos, Odysseos, and Aeneides, as the worthiest of poetry."

* * * * * *

Among the company of flowers that has just come to me there is a flower the name of which I do not know. It is not wholly unlike one of the flowers that I always thought to find next when, as a child, I went to the meadows and woods in flower-quest. The flower that I always hoped and thought to find next, when I was a child, was not a flower hitherto unto me wholly strange. It was a glorified presentment of flowers

familiar to me, and for which I had a great affection. They were the flowers of Paradise, in fact, that when I was a child I looked to find in the meadows and woods of faulty earth. And I do not think that I have even yet put off my childishness. I am still looking for the perfect flowers of Paradise on the wrong side of Styx. And even the Willowed Shores do not show them. However long I may live I shall never quite get it into my head, I think, that for the flowers of Paradise we must wait till Charon has ferried us across the silent waters. It is senseless to be looking always here for perfection. I see the folly of my conduct, but I cannot cure the foolishness.

XIX.

"PLEASE to make a second choice, in case the first selected is sold out when esteemed order is received," so runs the injunction affixed to a pattern-book of muslins sent to me from a shop to-day.

Persons who find earth's soil congenial are those, I think, to whom has been accorded dispositions ready and willing to make "a second choice, in case the first selected is sold out when esteemed order is received." I wish that mine was such a temperament. I could never make a "second choice." As far as Fortune's mart goes for me it is just one thing or nothing at all, and such exclusiveness must forerun distress. Passionately do I envy those who, going out eager to buy a yard of green silk, come home enraptured with an ell of drab fustian, for of such a description too often are Fate's bargains. Happily for the well-being of the community, the folk who find

satisfaction in the same are likewise by no means uncommon.

* * * * * *

When a very un-Mrs. Goodallish person was with me yesterday she said, "I envy *you*. I envy any one who, living in London, leads such a quiet life, and has time to think. Your room gives so vivid an impression of calm," she went on; "there is the cloistered feeling about it. How peaceful it seems." And the speaker looked round as if seeking to find in what especial feature the peacefulness lay.

It is strange of my room to have got that atmosphere. I do not know how it has acquired it: not from its owner, I fear. Perhaps the old books in their sober russet binding breathe of tranquillity, and perhaps the flower-pictures with which the walls are hung suggest realms remote from those where "the world is too much with us late and soon." And rooms maybe, as do people, put on in some intangible fashion an air that speaks of the customary solitude of their inmates. I myself have been accused of carrying with me the look of being much alone, and so is it that my room, as my friend says, gives the impression of tranquillity and of remoteness from the hurry and turmoil of life.

I wonder if human nature usually feels the alone,

remote feeling. I do not mean is solitude irksome as a rule, and the proximity of fellow-creatures agreeable. The alone feeling to which I refer hems me in on every side less in the absence than, with an exception or two, in the presence of others. When Mrs. Goodall and Lady Hightowers and Clara St. Quentin, for instance, engage me in conversation, the aloof feeling wraps me round, but I am not conscious of it if by myself, as the expression goes, save for the company of my dogs—my "Spaniels Gentle or Comforters," to quote their race's old appellation. A friend of my brother's, who once upon a time thought that I might have married him, repeatedly assured me that a diversity of tastes, opinions, and temperaments go to form and cement friendship and ties closer than friendship too. I contradicted the statement, or at least the conclusion from the premise drawn. So long as the fundamental principles and underlying aims of life accord, a diversity of attributes may very likely prove no bar to comradeship. Travellers journeying on the selfsame road need not be all of one profession, all of one humour, to secure the felicity of congenial company. Quite otherwise: we are not always wishful of talking shop, and the gay best enliven the grave, the serene tranquillize the emotional. When

too it comes to falling into love affairs, the attraction of opposites is perhaps one of the most important factors of the madness; but beneath all the diversity we must be journeying in the same direction if together we would truly go. You make your way north, I mine south; you set your face east, I mine west; we cannot be travelling companions, not in friendship, not in love. I have a book of prayer (I heard it lately characterised as old-fashioned, but it is modern enough for my needs), "*The Devotions of Bishop Andrewes, translated from the Greek*," the title runs. Before the volume was mine it was first my mother's, and then my father's. On the fly-leaf in the handwriting of my father, these words are inscribed: "*Cor unum, via una.*" I follow my father's creed.

To take up again the parable of this room, there certainly is not, as far as going and coming is concerned, much to disturb the stillness therein. It is very quiet in my room. The dogs lie in attitudes of indolent and confident languor wheresoe'er they will, free from all danger of hurt from hasty feet. The only change in the room from week's end to week's end, except the replacing of one chintz of gay device by another, and the renewal of white muslin curtains, is the change in the flowers. The Snowdrops

of spring disappear in due course, and their place is taken by Violets and Cowslips, which in turn make way for Tulips and Hyacinths, Fritillaries and Pansies, and so on, till the time of the Roses that have blown in the open air, and of purple Heather comes. Then the room goes into brown holland for a while.

Yes, as my friend said yesterday, mine in truth is a quiet life, and I have time to think. If the last is an advantage I do not know. Once when I complained to my uncle, the Professor of all Philosophies, that I could do so little, he answered, "You can think." But distraction, not thought, is what most people now seek. I do not know which plan is best. I have scarcely given the first a fair trial perhaps; of the second I can say in the words of Jaques, "Yes, I have got my experience."

Opportunity for thought has been mine assuredly; but that the opportunity has served any useful purpose I am not convinced. When I compare my notions with those of the majority of my friends, I do not find that mine always fit quite neatly into the pattern that I am told is of common-sense's own design.

Mrs. Goodall declares that my ideas are quite ridiculously romantic and high-flown. She grows angry sometimes because I do not, she says, suffi-

ciently grasp the realities of life. Mrs. Goodall's realities include the returning of card for card, cutlet for cutlet; and the taking of offence if the regulation of cards and cutlets is not governed by laws rigid as those of the Medes and Persians, and balanced with such a nicety as is requisite for success in the game of spillikins. In regard to that which people other than Mrs. Goodall term the realities of life, I feel as though I stood on sandy rather than rocky ground. The so-called material seems to me symbolical of the spiritual, and the so-called realities of life (I do not refer to Mrs. Goodall's) merely emblems of that which is indeed actual. Left to myself I should change the terms shadow and substance frequently. The substance sometimes seems to me but the shadow of that which it is beyond the power of our finite senses to conceive, and which is veiled in concession to this weakness.

We must smoke our glass under our present conditions before we can look at the sun.

As the years pass it becomes easier than when existence begins, to know what others truly think. The elders and betters of the young, those who have "got their experience" and might afford help, are unfortunately apt to teach not what they know is true, but what they believe is expedient. Truth I

am sure is always best. To inculcate the doctrine that in slight wilfulness or impatience we have the most heinous crime is scarcely to prepare a girl fitly for passing with courage and patience through the scenes that life's drama—call it tragedy or comedy—often puts upon the stage. In the dealings of the mature with the young there is too much doing evil that good may come. How many a woman must have said when it is too late, "If *only* I had known."

Perhaps, however, had the treatment meted out to us in youth been of a more candid and honest nature we should not have gained appreciably. In looking back, our blindness and obliviousness to those signs and symbols that nature, if not our parents and guardians, vouchsafed, is astounding. Why did we not read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest, we may well ask ourselves amazed, that which surely, without the light of after experience, was patent? It seems Nature's temper to grudge no trouble in the setting up of sign-posts, and, having set them up, to blindfold the travellers who pass by ways so furnished with guides to knowledge. It is but another proof of the so often proved assertion that we see alone what we bring eyes to see. We do not see that for which we do not look. Perhaps had my mother's experience been of the character of my own, and had she, who

died when I was a child, lived on, and in language as plain as the vulgar tongue can offer, foretold word for word what life would bring me also, I should, unheeding, have let her warning pass until such time as, the prophecy fulfilled, her words in all their undisguised significance at last spoke to me. Perhaps too in her sorest straits a woman's mother even cannot aid her much. Loquacious as women be, can a woman speak of that which she feels sharply, or bear the gentlest handling, by another woman, of pain that goes to the heart's very quick? For myself I think not.

The plot is very cunningly veiled in the book of Life's Lessons. In reading it over again in our thoughts, as we sit alone, we see often for the first time the true bearings of every trifling detail. And in looking back we find nothing irrelevant from first to last. All that was bore directly on the story that the volume tells, by an art that is perfect, fitted in and planned without mistake or miscalculation, tautology or omission.

* * * * * *

When Mrs. Goodall was with me yesterday she inquired who gave me the little diamond cross that I always wear. A cousin gave it to me, I said. I have frequently felt grateful for the fact that "Edward

the third, my lords, had seven sons." In consequence of the number of his progeny, almost every one is descended, as is my own stock, from his warlike majesty. With little risk of falsehood, therefore, we may give the title of cousins to most persons of our acquaintance, if to do so falls in with our comfort and convenience; as, on the occasion in point, verily it did with mine.

Why is the fault of Eve so much seldomer manifested by young than by middle-aged and elderly women? Maybe in the self-engrossment of youth we have the key to the puzzle: "Vacant heart and hand and eye," do not always permit others to "easy live and quiet die."

XX.

I HAD told the servant to admit no one this afternoon. On Sunday afternoon the quietude of the street gives a peaceful impression of which I grudge the loss; and as I knew the people whose company I would have welcomed were unable to bestow it on me, I thought I might permit to myself a holiday from the residue. But my acquaintance-book gives two names against the owners of which no human agency can bar the door. I defy any one to rebuff Clara St. Quentin if she sets her heart upon ingress; and where Mrs. Goodall believes duty to call her there goes she, regardless of a whole battery of "not at homes."

"My gratitude to your uncle for his kindness would not allow me to rest till I had expressed my thanks," was the sentence with which Clara explained her forced entrance as she hurried in soon after

luncheon, bedecked with many fly-away ribands and glittering bangles, and evidently in that frame of mind that my maid describes as a "flutter." "His chivalry is really quite prehistoric. So different to the majority of young men of the present day, who are either gauche or positively insolent. That old-world courtesy—courtliness I might say—is so very refreshing. He really is quite a dear. I feel so touched, and I always hope he knows that it is not thrown away upon me."

I was so far in the dark as to the form in which the "prehistoric chivalry" had manifested itself. Our uncle, the Professor of all Philosophies, and the St. Quentin family have, I know, one habit in common—they attend the same church; but I had heard nothing from either my uncle or my brother Antony of an encounter that morning with Clara.

"As we were coming out of church," Clara went on, "it looked so threatening (the rain was beginning to fall, in fact) that I thought I would get into one of those horrid halfpenny omnibuses that run up the street; my gown spots so, you know. At that very moment I saw Professor Hardacre just behind me, and I called to him (though everybody looked round at hearing me and made me so uncomfortable by staring) to come into the omnibus too, as I was sure

we were going to have heavy rain, and the half-penny omnibus (which of course is a terrible rattle-trap) would take him half the way home. The dear courteous old thing answered that he would not think of incommoding me by overcrowding, and he was off and away under his umbrella before I could say any more. I should not like him to think that I was unconscious of his considerate kindness. Nothing is more shocking than ingratitude."

"My uncle is not at home at present," I said. I knew that Clara's final sentence tacitly demanded an opportunity for a directly verbal expression of her thanks.

"That *is* unfortunate," Clara replied; "for it is by no means easy for me to escape from our own visitors on Sunday afternoon. I told Mamma, however, that she really must let me slip out for once; for courtesy should be met with courtesy, I always say; and it seems to me so true that it is the modern women who are to blame for the decadence of chivalry. Men are what we make them, of course. 'You must manage to talk to the gentlemen who call yourself, Mamma, for this once,' I said, 'and if any one very clever comes, you can say I shall be back immediately.'"

Just at that moment the door was thrown open and

Mrs. Goodall sailed into the room—if the word sailed can be applied to so solid and decided an approach.

"As I missed you from Divine Service, Bethia," she said, "I have called to know if it is your neuralgia or what it is now that deprived you of the privilege of worshipping. From your servant I gather that you are not more ailing than usual?"

"I have a headache," I answered.

"Does your doctor never tell you that these constant headaches come from indigestion?" Mrs. Goodall asked, with the ring of ill-suppressed irritation in her voice that the mention of my neuralgia produces.

I truthfully assured her that he never had.

"I don't believe in Sir Chiron," Mrs. Goodall exclaimed angrily, turning from me to Clara. "His practice is too large for him to attend with the best results such nervous, fanciful cases as Bethia's. As I have told you before, Bethia," once more addressing me, "a sensible general practitioner is what you require. I think, as you know, most highly of Mr. Jones; and I have no doubt whatever that he would treat you most sagaciously, and not give in to your whims and ideas, as I know well enough these fashionable doctors do. His system is the common-sense one. 'I take the common-sense

view of the case, Mrs. Goodall,' is what he said himself last Monday when I called him in for one of the girls. He would diet you, and insist upon your rousing yourself. He is a thoroughly good man too, and his pew in church is in front of ours."

"I should have no confidence in Mr. Jones," I answered. "The back of his coat hides his collar, which would destroy my faith." (I never can resist talking utter nonsense to Mrs. Goodall, she responds so quickly.) "It is very well for him to say that his is the common-sense view of the case," I continued. "Would any doctor come and say, 'Mine is the nonsensical opinion of the patient'? If such a one could be found it would certainly amuse me to consult him."

"Do not be childish," Mrs. Goodall replied sternly. "Mr. Jones is a thoroughly good, earnest-minded man, and there is nothing ridiculous in him whatever. I am sure it is quite a lesson to see any one as busy as he is—and he has a very good general practice, Bethia—putting aside worldly claims and coming in to church just as frequently—more frequently in fact—than do those whose life is one of idleness. I have a great respect for Mr. Jones, a very great respect, and so has Mr. Goodall; and Mrs. Jones is a very superior woman. She was one of the Berkshire

Blenkinsops, and I always invite her to my Wednesdays." Mrs. Goodall closed her lips with a snap and looked wrathfully round.

"I did not see you this morning, Mrs. Goodall," Clara St. Quentin here said. "I was in church myself, and I hurried here much against Mamma's wish I am afraid (we have such hosts of people always on Sundays), to thank Professor Hardacre for the extreme kindness, quite Paladin-like, that he showed me as we were coming out. He really is one of the people who carry their Christianity into their daily life."

"I earnestly hope that the pursuit of science has not destroyed what is infinitely more precious," Mrs. Goodall drily answered, the expression of her countenance suggestive of far more doubt than hope.

"Oh, but don't you think that we ought to face things?" Clara cried eagerly, bending forward, hot for the fray, with the little jerky movements that rattle all her bangles. "Is it not Renan who says that honest doubt is—is—I can't quite remember at this moment what it was he did say. Miss Hardacre, what was it that Renan did say about honest doubt?"

I made a sign to Clara to desist. This was worse than my want of appreciation of Mr. Jones's self-ascribed common-sense, and disbelief in his diagnosis

in consequence of the fashion of his coat. Upon a Sunday afternoon, with Mrs. Goodall seated opposite to me tapping her foot on the carpet impatiently—the expression of pained and disapproving severity drawing lines the while down at the corners of her mouth, and heightening her already florid colour—I had no desire, reckless as I am, to pose as an authority on the works of Renan. At this crisis Clara opportunely remembered that Mrs. St. Quentin was doubtless, in consequence of her daughter's absence, enjoying the hapless condition known as being at the sufferer's "wit's end"; and taking as hurried a leave of us as the many injunctions on the delivering of messages to my uncle permitted, she made her way home.

"What a pity it is that Miss St. Quentin cannot remember that she is no longer a girl," was Mrs. Goodall's comment as soon as the door closed upon Clara. "That new hat of hers would be suitable enough for my young Maria, with her nice fresh complexion and bloom; but for a woman of thirty, and who looks old for thirty, and is as haggard as Miss St. Quentin is, it really is quite an eyesore. I was noticing as she sat there how worn she looked."

"I did not notice that she looked particularly

worn," I answered, not quite truthfully, I fear; but the spirit of opposition that Mrs. Goodall invariably creates was growing apace. I need not though, from sentiments of loyalty to the absent, have rebutted the epithet worn as applied to Clara. She herself would not have resented it. It is no fine look of health, no air of youth that Clara covets, and with which she in her own mind dowers herself. "Charm" was the attribute that Clara had mentally taken as her characteristic some years ago; and that "charm" would be hers so long as that which is herself survives is her creed.

"Well, I am sure I am very glad to hear that there is nothing particularly amiss with you," Mrs. Goodall said austerely, as she rose and wished me good-bye, "very glad indeed. As you know, I am fully engaged on Sunday afternoons, with all my young people at home, and it has always been our endeavour to make Sunday a happy day; but as I said to Maria, 'Little as I approve of Sunday visiting, I shall call to-day upon Bethia, for only a grave reason would surely keep her again from morning service. She has probably broken a blood-vessel, or got inflammation of her lungs.' I am truly thankful to find that I was wrong;" and severely embracing me, Mrs. Goodall departed, breaths of displeasure seeming to float from

every fold of her "handsomely" trimmed black silk Sunday gown.

* * * * * *

To bring the rustic sounds pertaining to the open air within the confines of this London room is a feat I think it very kind of Pan to accomplish. The street, as I have said, is comparatively quiet during the afternoon of Sunday, and since Mrs. Goodall and Clara went I have heard a sound of which Pan was the author. A soft thud drew my eyes from the pages wherein I was taking to myself old John Parkinson's Lavender lore—as oil to waters troubled by the east winds of Mrs. Goodall's ruffling personality.

The soft thud, I found, had origin in the agreeably rude stock of health and vitality that the great double Poppy-buds set in my Lowestoft jar still retain, notwithstanding three days' subjection to the enervating airs of the town as breathed from the window-seat. The opaquely solid jade-green shell had failed longer to enthral the transparently frail orange petals—petals truly of such cobweb texture that, did a fairy story princess include among the articles of her wearing apparel a gown fashioned of the same, hers would be at least one garment that triumphantly stood the passing through a wedding-ring test. The green pod with its rough outer surface and glossy lining of white

satin, lay upon the window-seat, and before my eyes almost the blossom shook itself out.

Pan, I think, shows the instinct of quality in his linings. His is not the vulgar taste of the rabble that tolerates the donning of a silken skirt over a petticoat of coarse duffle. The Nymphs, with a like nice discrimination, are all too great ladies, and when going a-marketing for the equipment of the flowers will have at least the fine linen if not invariably the purple. What a delicate discretion in such affairs has the Dryad in whose charge is the outfit of the Horse-chestnuts. Without, the husk of those most engaging of childish toys may be harsh enough to the touch, but within the highly polished brown plaything has, for swathing, silvery wrappings of delightful texture.

There is a sound pertaining to summer that year by year I count upon hearing, but which, hitherto, I have never brought within the boundary of four walls. The gentle artillery of the Whin when returning the hot beams of the sun's fire with the crackling report akin to the crackling of kindled wood is, to my mind, of all sounds the most suggestive of golden noon and the honey-sweet incense of summer.

Superstition forbids the bringing of the Whin

indoors. Whoso brings the Whin across the threshold is the forerunner of another comer, in whose hand is a torch reversed, and whose awful presence may also be symbolically portrayed by the emblem of a cage from which the bird has flown.

* * * * * *

Since writing the line above I have taken into my hand one of the serpentine stems bowed by the weight of a great double Poppy's massive bud. For all the seemingly passive pliancy, there is motive power in that which lies inertly languid in my clasp. I set it against my cheek, impelled by the vain desire to detect some tremor, some faint indication of the whirr of the wheels of vitality and the pulse of life. The heart of the great Poppy must surely throb. It is I that am too dull to hear or feel it. Why cannot we refine our senses sufficiently to catch the thrill? The power that will presently triumph in ridding the diaphanous petals of the substantial shroud gives no token of its presence. The parable that the Poppy speaks when the solid sheath gives way and the frail flower conquers is therefore the more perfect. It is the parable of which there can never be too frequent manifestations—the parable which, even to the heart-broken, brings hope—the parable I mean of the victory of the spiritual over the material.

Good heavens, what would be Mrs. Goodall's strictures were it brought to her knowledge that in futile endeavour to catch the throb of the Poppies' hearts I am frittering away moments and moments of Sunday's afternoon.

"Really, Bethia, you should rouse yourself and turn your thoughts to sensible objects," she would say. "In a case of delicate health," well can I imagine her telling me, "I do not know that knitting on Sunday is wrong, when tired of books. Or I would even sooner see you with some art needlework in your hand for my stall at the church sale than have you sitting mooning there."

Were Mrs. Goodall conscious of my shortcomings I should scarcely escape the advent of Maria early to-morrow morning bearing a "chair back" half-way to completion, and to be carried out to the bitter end in strict accordance with the distressing canons of art as expounded by bazaar needle-women. So still does women's work "fill Ithaca full of moth." (How true to feminine criticism is that speech of Valeria's.)

XXI.

I HAVE just come upon a prescription for mirth, nearer three than two hundred years old, that is pleasant reading to the curious in such matters.

(By the way, if the supply-and-demand laws have always regulated the marts of the world, depression of spirits is no idiosyncrasy of this century's. The old medicinal works teem with unguents "For the heaviness of the hart," "To comfort the harte," "To keep backe cares and melancholicke fits." "Good against melancholly." "Good for all melancholique dreames." "To comfort the hart, spirits and suppress melancholly." "For the harte's sicknesse.")

"*Show me a way to make the hart merry.*—You must use, after the example of Galen, to carry about you a sweet Pomander, and to have alwayes in your chamber some good perfumes: or you may wash your face and hands with sweet waters; for nothing in the world can so exhilerate and purifie the spirits as good odours. It is most convenient to use

naturall pastime as a whetstone of wit, such as shooting, bowling, tennise, hunting, fencing, &c. But indeed, Musicke such as the Violl, the Irish Harpe, &c., will allure the outward senses, and also temper the extravagant thoughts of the minde more than anything; as appeared by Saul's Lunacie, by Orpheus his civilizing of the Savages, by stilling of little Infants and Bees. And even as faire colours doe please the eyes, sweet-meats the taste, perfumes the nose, so melodious Musicke will afford delight not only to the eares but to the dejected spirit. Here, also, I cannot but highly commend the loud Musicke of our country Coridens, Pipes, Tabours and Bagpipes, so they use them not to prophane the Sabaoth day as I have knowne some."

From the chapter on "Skill in Perfumes" of Gervase Markham's *Office of a Housewife*, I obtain a receipt for the making of the like Pomanders if, "after the example of Galen," I ever have the fancy to carry such about me. "To make Pomanders," says he, "take two pennyworths of labdanum, two pennyworths of storax liquid, one pennyworth of calamus aromaticus, as much balm, half a quarter of a pound of fine wax, of Cloves and mace two pennyworth, of liquid aloes three pennyworth, of nutmegs eight pennyworth, and of Musk four grains; beat all these

exceedingly together, till they come to a perfect substance, then mould it in any fashion you please and dry it."

To-morrow I think I will see about the fashioning of Pomanders from these directions. On the same page as the one from which I have quoted instructions are given for the fabricating of a Musk-ball, and a perfume to burn. I did the other day make experiment of a receipt from *The Queen's Closet Opened*, a book indeed of quality, seeing that it sets forth among the list of its prescribers and approvers King Edward VI., Queen Elizabeth, King Charles I., Queen Mary, Lady Elizabeth, daughter of King Charles I., Lord Bacon, vic. of St. Albans, Lord Arundel, Lord Spencer, Sir Walter Raleigh, Sir Kenelm Digby, and many more. I can testify to the worth of the receipt that I made trial of, for truly it resulted in a fragrance that permitted me for the while to imagine that the casements of this room gave upon a Rose-garden, and not upon the street.

"*King Edward's Perfume.*—Take twelve spoonfuls of right red Rose-water, the weight of sixpence in fine powder of sugar, and boil it on hot embers and cool softly, and the house will smell as though it were full of Roses; but you must burn the sweet Cypress wood before, to take away the gross air."

Of Bethia Hardacre

OF BETHIA'S TRINKETS.

(*By Antony.*)

QUOTH I to her one day, "Tautologist thou art
To wear that shining cross linked to that crystal heart."
Quoth she, "Can woman's heart e'er from her cross be far?"
Quoth I, "Alas, dear child, the self-same things they are."

OF HER CRYSTAL HEART.

(*By Antony.*)

"WHO gave," I said, "this crystal heart to thee?"
"Unto myself I gave it," answered she.
"It had been broken, the poor heart; and so
The price he asked, the merchant said, was low.
Hearing his reason, could I turn away
As though ten shillings were too much to pay?"

A SPECIAL PLEADER.

(*By Antony.*)

"How I hate lamps," Bethia frowning cried,
(Our poverty electric light denied),
And when to ask her reason I went on,
Promptly she answered thus my question:
"By lamplight was it that poor Psyche gazed
Upon her lover, and with joy amazed
Dropped from the horrid thing a little oil—
Costing herself, so, years of pain and toil:
Had she electric light within her room,
She might have seen Love, yet escaped her doom."

XXII.

My sister, Letitia, came to see me this morning. I told her that I should like to make a book of my flower-drawings. My flower-drawings are outlines in silver-point, and I should like to interleave the outlines with pages of colour,—colour without form. "You should carry out your idea," my sister said. "People would say you were mad, doubtless; but that would not matter."

No, it would not matter, certainly. The people who would say I was mad because I printed a book one page of which consisted of outline and the next of colour only, are not the specimens of humanity from whom I would eagerly ask or accept a certificate of sanity. I am in agreement with my cousin Julia, who says that our fellow-creatures give us no peace till we have established a character for slight craziness; and I agree also with an acquaintance

of Antony's who said to him, "For our servants and dependents, sanity: yes. But for ourselves and our friends, no." And to establish a character for eccentricity is surprisingly easy, at least it was so till a very recent date. I do not know if, when the generation older than my own has passed away, it will be at all easy to establish such a character; but among the women of that generation, and of Mrs. Goodall's type, to get a reputation for singularity is the simplest affair in the world. To diverge in the slightest degree from the paths off which the grass has been trodden by the feet of these good souls and their predecessors is to proclaim oneself either bad or mad, if not both. Warnings against treading on the turf meet the traveller's eyes at every turn in that dominion so thickly populated with middle-aged and elderly ladies holding card-cases in their tightly-gloved hands. Who first marked out, I am tempted to inquire, the orthodox paths that cross and re-cross the jealously-kept social region? Was it an angel or a demi-god, that such and no others are allowable through all time? I am looked upon as ridiculous, irreverent almost, for putting such a question. Really, what extraordinary notions are mine. Not a writ, but invitations to a tea-party are issued to inquire into the state of my

mind. But this is not so with the younger women. Each generation, I imagine, has its vices and virtues peculiar to itself. There seem to me prospects in the future of a poorer crop of the censorious and sanctimonious orders than was habitual in the past. The harvests of charity show no signs of failing. The seeds of conceit and wilfulness may be sowing themselves broadcast; but among the vices to which the present soil proves congenial those of the Pharisee find no room. The Pharisee is out of fashion.

(On second thoughts I do not feel convinced, however, that the Pharisee stock is extinct. Has social evolution slid the soul of the Pharisee into the pride that apes humility mould? In sacred precincts, even, I have seen a keen and jealous rivalry for the *last* place. For the worshipper who believes that the last shall be first, to force another to advance is conduct not quite, according to my notions, in harmony with the spirit that breathes through that chapter in Corinthians, the words of which, at least, we have most of us got by heart.)

I do not think that young people and children are quick to detect or desirous of condemning oddity. Variation from the customary is not apparent to children always. In youth we scarcely know what is customary, and therefore can have no strict code

by which to compare behaviour and demeanour. If I were to affect terror at the sight of an earwig, my emotion would strike my small niece, I have no doubt, as ridiculous; but she would not suspect me of eccentricity by reason of my dinner-hour or the times of my out-goings and in-comings being other than those of my neighbours. Affectation is the *bête noire* of youthful critics, and to be accused of affectation is a charge before which few children can preserve a brave and careless front. Affectation is certainly the horror and terror of my little niece, and she will put herself to infinite trouble to avoid all marks of the beast. My sister tells a story which provides an example of her conduct in this respect. The parable of the ewe lamb was asked of her. To escape the taint of any verbal affectation or high-flown rhetoric, Letty opened the allegory in these words: "There was a man who had a sheep who sat upon his chest."

I have often observed the child's dislike to Clara St. Quentin, and I said to her once, "Why are you not fond of Miss St. Quentin, Letty? She is very kind to you, and will always play when you would like to dance."

Letty, with a shame-faced look, and scraping the while the toe of one of her restless feet upon the

carpet, answered, "Because she puts out her little finger when she drinks her tea."

* * * * * *

To go back to my outlines of flowers interleaved with colour scheme. Pleasure might be got from the colours, I think—turquoise-blue and the purple of purple Iris; orange and pale coral-pink; green and Daffodil yellow; Myrtle-green and red; scarlet and white; mauve and orange; turquoise-blue, mauve and orange; saffron and amethyst; emerald-green and turquoise-blue; rose-pink and jade-green; scarlet flushing into crimson and yellow brightening to orange; indigo-blue and Mandarin yellow; amber transformed into pink; amber rose-pink and gold; dead-white interlaced with ivory; ivory and orange; the blue of old Worcester china and the dusky garnets of Indian-red; the peacock-blue of Persian pottery and the orange of a Marigold. Other pages could show turquoise turning to peacock-blue and peacock-blue to indigo; the palest coral-pink taking on orange and crimson; ivory flushing to yellow, and yellow to orange. I would have a sheet, too, of white and black upon which one flake of colour lay; turquoise-blue, it might be, or coral-pink, or orange, or vermilion.

(I am the owner of my great-grandmother's opals, and from the contemplation of their fire much satis-

faction is mine. I thank fate for letting me inherit the mystic decoration, although perhaps my ill-luck is owing to its possessorship. The gleams of pink and flame, of green that is no canny green, of blue—blue as the snap-dragon of childish Christmas Eves—are delightful to me. In Pliny I find a cordial admirer of the opal, and of it he writes laudatory words: "For in the Opal you shall see the burning Fire of the Carbuncle or Ruby, the glorious purple of the Amethyst, the green Sea of the Emerald, and all glittering together mixed after an incredible manner.")

When I send forth my contemplated volume I shall name it *The Book of Outline and Colour;* the leaves shall be tipped with gold, diapered; and for binding will I have none but rainbow silk.

In my dreams I came, on one occasion, upon some titles for books. As I awoke I heard myself saying, "Bring me my *Book of Roses* and *The Directory of the Dead.*"

We owe to Pliny this receipt for bringing Roses speedily on:

"They that desire to have Roses blow betimes in the year before their neighbours, use to make a trench round about the roots a foot deep, and pour hot water into it even at the first when the bud of the Rose beginneth to be knotted."

Pages from the Day-Book

APOLOGY FOR POETRY.

If poets hold that song leads unto fame,
Do not night's skies the self-same creed proclaim,
When Lyra's stars in line direct shine down
'Twixt those of Pegasus and of the Crown?

SIR PLUME TO SACHARISSA: WHO IS CROSS.

Sweet is thy voice and, prithee, let
The music and the words agree,
Lest I the meaning quite forget
In listening to the melody:
Tidings so harsh can never bear
Transmission by so soft an air.

Could I believe it were I told
That gentle Philomela sung
How that her heart as ice was cold,
And love no pity from her wrung?
Nay, I should swear mine ears heard wrong
To link such words to such a song.

So, that thy servant may believe
That surely he has heard aright,
Some fitting message interweave
With tones enfraught with all delight:
Then may I take thee at thy word,
Knowing that I have rightly heard.

XXIII.

My far-away cousin Cicely came to see me a little while ago. "How far are we responsible?" she asked me. "Are we responsible for what we think and feel as well as for what we do?"

"That is a question which I had been about to put to some one else," I answered. "I hope we are only responsible for what we do. That is more than sufficient."

I looked at Cicely as I spoke, but it was not of her but of myself that I thought, as I finished my sentence.

Cicely is a very pleasant sight, with her wistful grey eyes and clearly-cut features, and I saw her across a fence of flowers that was pretty also. Not that we were out of doors at the time. We were in the upper chamber of this house in London town, but a great basket of flowers had just come from the

country, and the contents of the hamper set out upon a table between us showed a perfect flower-garden of bloom, and over a hedge of Tulips, Pansies, Rosemary, Hyacinths, and Columbines, we regarded each other.

"Life, I think, is like a game of cards," I went on, "the dealer—Fate. But in the playing of the cards there is free will. To some of us are dealt hands that are hard to play. To some Fate, the dealer, deals many trumps; to others cards that go to make good or bad playing hands; to others hands containing brilliant possibilities. We may make the most of a poor hand or throw away the court cards of a good. Were I Shakespeare I would write—

'All the world's green baize,
And all the men and women but card-players.'"

My listener smiled and assented.

"I hope," she repeated, "that we are not responsible for what we think and feel. As to what we do, *I* should never do anything really bad, I feel sure of that."

I agreed with Cicely. I did not think either that she would ever do anything really bad; but, afterwards, when I was alone, a clause in the Litany recalled itself persistently to me—"The *craft and subtlety* of the devil." Yes, the devil is very crafty

and very subtle, and of whom can we say positively that he or she will never do anything really wrong?

In the Soul-book that I keep I find that most of the cases that have come to sorest straits have reached the deep waters by a downward way across which the wrong-doer built up no barricades, deeming that the temptation to descend that wise would never come.

Were the Soul-doctor's profession mine, it would not be my method to bid any who came to me for spiritual aid and light, confess and overcome the "besetting" sin. I do not think that by the "besetting" sin's aperture the devil usually pushes in the thin end of the wedge. If that were so, how comparatively simple a matter the resisting of evil would be. To my Soul-patients I would say, "Tell me the form of sin against which you feel secure; the one commandment which, at least, you will never break." And that told, I would declare, "There lies your weakest point; for, 'Let him who thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.'"

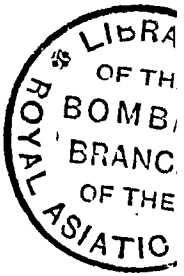
Nor is it, my observation leads me to think, often through our worst qualities that either our trial or our trouble comes. In the garb of some virtue, the author of Evil seems to cloak, in the beginning, his designs. Are you tender-hearted?—your pitifulness

may serve as a snare. Do you love whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely?—therein may lie the pitfall. How many a man has come to care too much for a woman because suffering touched his heart. A selfish, egotistical brute, devoid of tenderness and compassion, would never have reached the stage when the desire to help and shelter passed legitimate bounds. How many a woman has come to love "not wisely but too well", because she preferred what was good to what was bad, what was strong to what was weak, what was high-minded and heroic to what was degraded and contemptible. We all know that we should strive to hate not the sinner but the sin. To some of us this is an easier lesson to master than is the one that comprises the loving of the saintliness but not the saint.

I remember Julia saying to me (apropos of some one whose story resembled that of the heroine of *Jess*)—"How hard it is. What she desired was shown to her, and then she might not put out her hand and take what her nature made her want. Why are our lives fashioned after such a plan?"

I remember that for answer I laughed. Why indeed?

We cannot understand.



XXIV.

A WEDDING was solemnized this morning in the church hard by. Not one of the weddings, such as are customary, that fill the street with carriages and the church with persons of quality, or at least of riches; but a wedding between those whose addresses are not in the Red Book. The bride's air was that of a servant-girl, the bridegroom's perhaps that of a shopman. But it is not of the wedding nor of the bridal company of which I have aught to say. It was the criticism of one of the lookers-on that interested me. When a hansom had carried away the bride and bridegroom, I, passing down the street, overheard the conversation of a knot of women whose lot in life might be that of servants too. "She had not her gloves on when she came out," was the observation, uttered in tones that suggested regret, that attracted my attention.

Now here we have the point of view from which the doings of their fellow-creatures are contemplated by all those sensible women who do not permit romantic and ridiculous notions to swamp the sober prose of life. The girl had just taken part in the solemn service of matrimony, and the ceremony's salient feature in the eyes of her friends expressed itself in the words that "she had not her gloves on when she came out."

And such details, I believe, are those of which the world of worthy women, gentle as well as simple, mostly takes cognizance. We may rejoice or grieve, sicken or prosper, and half the estimable persons of our acquaintance will, over and above the primal circumstance, note if we the while have our gloves on or not. And how many women are there who can forget the donning of their gloves? I could count upon the fingers of one hand those of my acquaintance who would ever forget it. I can forget, to my shame, I confess. I have found myself on the doorstep, in this very Londony London street, pinning on my hat and buttoning up my coat as I might in a garden in Arcady, and so have a fellow-feeling for such neglect of the conventionalities in others; but my sympathy is not often called into play in this particular.

Of Bethia Hardacre

Though women are so fickle in the matter of fashion in wearing-apparel, and are for ever seeking some new thing, the average woman—she who pertains to what we term the "lower classes" especially —really looks upon innovation pretty generally as insult. What is usual, what is customary, is what is expedient and desirable. If I tell those persons for whom my name is "the thralls" that "it has always been my habit" to enforce whatever may be the rule under discussion the order is not questioned, nor would it be with such a prologue, I believe, were my wishes extravagantly ludicrous and unreasonable. But do I desire any alteration, although the change entails neither trouble nor inconvenience, I find there is many a lion in the path. To regard with suspicion and apprehension whatever is not clearly understood is one of the most notable attributes of uneducated minds. "It has been my invariable habit," is the formula that I commend to those brought into contact with ignorance. For ignorance most readily submits when custom dictates.

I must let my writing take a different form to-day. I will let it take the form of a letter that will never be sent. We have authority for holding that the letters that are never sent are the best letters—

A LETTER THAT WILL NEVER BE SENT.

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Surely, here, could any one see what the flames have consumed, it would be allowed that I have produced the exception that proves the rule, that the best letters are those that are never sent, or that are written with the consciousness that they never will be sent. It has long been my practice to write letters that I knew as I wrote them I would never send, but, till I read the printed statement on the subject, I did not know if such was an unusual form of literary energy or no. It is curious why it should be a relief to write that which we mean the fire to receive as soon as it is written, but so it is. I asked Mrs. Goodall once if she ever had written letters that she knew the while she would not send.

"Dear me, no," she said. "I have written letters sometimes that I thought better of afterwards—second thoughts are frequently, as you know, Bethia, best—and have not sent; but certainly I never wrote a

letter with an intention of not sending it. What object could so be gained?"

I could not say what object could so be gained. I only know that I have done the seemingly futile deed over and over again. And I suppose there is as much and as little use in the performance as there is in other methods for the dispersing of emotion. It is a safety-valve, and in that respect of service, and secures the user perhaps from coming on the world's stage in cap and bells.

It seems to me that men go in much greater fear of making themselves ridiculous than women do. The fear of appearing in a ridiculous light would never hinder me from carrying out any project on which I had set my heart, and to find the part of laughing-stock assigned to me is a fate that I could contemplate with perfect fortitude. I may appear ridiculous or not, but so long as the mockers' mockery does not defeat the end I have in view, it is very much to me, as a rule, as though they did not mock; and as I am in this respect so likewise a good many women are constituted I think. I never yet knew a man who shared to the full extent the characteristic. The state of mind that recognizes the possibility of ridicule but remains unbiased by it, is, in my experience, unknown to men. Many a man who would without

hesitation lead a forlorn hope, or perform any other heroic deed, thinks more than twice before running the risk of acting after a fashion that would possibly place the actor in a ludicrous light whatever results of an advantageous nature the action in question might ensure.

And there is another point in which the difference between men and women appears to me as vast. Men, though they all deny it, consider "appearances" a hundred times more even than do the majority of women. In the case of many women, we can almost in the matter of "appearances" paraphrase Bacon's words of death—"There is no passion in the mind so weak but it mates and masters the fear of death. . . . Revenge triumphs over death, love slights it . . . fear pre-occupieth it." Public opinion means more to men than it does to women, I suppose; perhaps also "appearances" strike men in a truer light, and they are not as ingenuous in the construction of Fool's Paradises as, by a compensating law of nature, women be.

Of Bethia Hardacre

TO ——

A CHRISTMAS PRESENT.

OUT of the past, I wind a wreath for you,
And, firstly, string together Violets blue,
Plucked in the dawn and glistening with the dew.

To these I link a strand of Roses white
Whose petals caught and crystallized the light
Cast by the stars one dreamy summer night.

The bloom of purple Heather then I add,
Holding the hue the moor at sunset had
In all the mystic glow of Heather clad.

Next scarlet berries of so gay a dye
That they the yule-logs' flaming fires outvie
Do I entwine, and to the garland tie.

And then, to crown this Christmas gift, I place
A scroll on which your name in gold I trace
Where Heather and white Roses interlace.

TO CICELY: WHOSE LIFE IS SAD.

ALL seasons have their flowers: thy blossoming time
Is the dark tide of winter's frost and rime:
Fate owns her Snowdrops who of life but know
Suffering's fierce blast and sorrow's icy snow.

XXV.

To a volume printed at the sign of the Three Bibles on London Bridge in the year 1675 we owe the lore that I inscribe in my book to-day.

"An exact judgement of ancient Astrologers of the general accidents in the world that shall happen to men, women and children by the falling of New Yeare's Day."

"Knowing on what day of the week New Yeare's Day will fall. If it fall on Sunday a pleasant winter ensueth, a natural and kindly summer, abundance of fruit, the harvest will be indifferent for weather, but producing some winds and rain. A temperate and seasonable spring. It denotes many marriages, plenty of wine and honey: the death of young men and cattle, robberies in most places, new prelates and kings, cruel wars towards the end of the year, or at least dissention and discord among men.

"If it fall on Monday the winter will be somewhat uncomfortable, the summer temperate, no great plenty of fruit. Fancies and fables dispersed abroad, many agues. The death of kings and nobles and great men, in most places marriages and a downfall of the gentry.

"If on Tuesday, there follows a stormy winter and a wet summer, a various harvest, a moist spring, corn and fruit indifferent; pet garden herbs shall not flourish; great sickness among men, women and children; a mortality of cattle, and everything save corn shall be very dear.

"If on Wednesday, a warm winter in the beginning, but towards the end snow or frost; a cloudy summer, plenty of fruit, also of corn, wine, hay and honey, and other things. Death to many children, plenty of sheep, news of kings and great wars, bloodshed towards the midst.

"If on Thursday, both winter and summer windy and a rainy harvest. Many inundations towards the latter end of the year. Much fruit, and plenty of the fruits of the earth and honey. Flesh shall be dear by reason of the death of cattle in general. Great troubles and commotions about matters religious.

"If on Friday, a stormy winter, and no pleasant spring nor summer, and indifferent harvest; small

store of fruit; wine, honey, and corn dear; many blear eyes; many youths shall die. Earthquakes in many places, much thunder and lightning, also very tempestuous at land and at sea. A great mortality among cattle, great commotions in many countries and kingdoms, and many heart divisions among men.

"If on Saturday, a mean winter, a very hot summer, a late harvest, and a dry windy spring; garden herbs shall be cheap, plenty of honey, flax and hemp. The death of ancient people in most places, many fevers and tertian agues, great rumours of wars, and sudden murders in many places for, or upon little or no occasion."

How prevalent was ague in the past. Remedies for the hot and cold fits of the disorder abound in medicinal works of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Disease varies with the epochs,—ague, smallpox, typhoid. Death, I suppose, would grow stale if his hand always clasped one weapon.

The following is a simple specific for an uncommon complaint. I take it from *A Book of Knowledge*, and offer it to the taciturn—

"*For a Recovery of Speech.*—Take the juice of Sage and Primroses and hold it in the mouth, and it will cause thee to speak presently."

Of Bethia Hardacre

When I attended Primrose League Meetings I found business procedure lamentably impeded by the excessive garrulity of the ladies. Were the flowers at fault?

Persons not yet skilled in the ordering of Singing-Birds should thank me also for these precepts done into English from the French long ago—

"*Of the King of Birds, or little King, otherwise called Robin Redbreast.*—You shall understand that the little King, or King of Birds, is naturally very small and of a daintie, tractable complexion; hee singeth most sweetly, and is not much inferior in this respect to the nightengale. . . . You must keepe him warm in his nest, giving him for his meate of a sheepe's heart, or a calve's, minced. He must be fed with a little at once and oft by reason of his digestion, being careful that hee take no cold. . . . For which cause you shall put him in a cage which hath some prettie provision made like a little chamber, trimmed with red cloth, and made as it were a little hot-house, whereunto hee may go in the nighte season and shun the cold the whole year."

XXVI.

A BOOK into which I have just looked, published in the seventeenth century, suggests a statute of manners so elementary and far removed from our own as to prove entertaining, I think. I read in the seventh chapter of this volume the following instructions for a "gentlewoman in her behaviour at the table, abroad and at home" :—"Being at table in your due place, observe to keep your body straight, and lean not by any means with your elbows, nor by ravenous gesture discover a voracious appetite. Knaw no bones, but cut your meat decently with the help of your fork. . . . Eat not your spoon-meat so hot as to make your eyes water. . . . Wipe your spoon every time you dip it in the dish; if you eat spoon-meat with others, eat not too fast nor unseemly. . . . Take not in your wine and other liquor too greedily, nor drink till you are out of breath. . . . If

you are abroad at dinner let not your hand be first in the dish, and whensoever you carve keep your fingers from your mouth. Throw not anything over your shoulder."

If conduct, judging from the rules needed to restrain "a gentlewoman in her behaviour at the table abroad or at home," two hundred years and more ago, usually left something to be desired, the same cannot be said of the capabilities of the servants of the time. "The Compleat Chamber-Maid" must in truth have warranted the epithet, and would that I could find a like treasure to wait upon me now and perform such varied duties. We thankfully accept less at present; but in the seventeenth century if a chamber-maid desired to "gain or continue a good opinion" she must, I learn from the previously quoted source, over and above the exhibition of much moral worth, "keep all things in her chamber in good order, and have them in readiness on all occasions to take off the care of her mistress." Skilled likewise she must or ought to be "in buying fine knacks"; and just must she be found in returning her accounts. "If there be no butler she must see all things decently managed for the accommodation of the guests in the parlour and dining-room, and, above all, have a regard to the linnen, plate, and other furniture under her command. And

besides her skill in dressing and attiring her mistress, be skilful in making spoon-meats, pickling things useful for sawces or garnishing, washing and starching tiffanies, lawn black and white, sarsnet, points and other curious lace; and likewise she ought to be skilful at making such scouring materials as will cleanse silver or gold lace, silver or gold plate, take spots out of linnen, silks, stuffs or cloth."

Longer surely were the good old days than are these of our degenerate time. Not now would the hours permit "the Compleat Chamber-Maid," in addition to "dressing and attiring her mistress," "buying knacks," and having "a regard to the linnen, plate and other furniture," to find available moments for the performance of such arduous tasks as are included in the fabrication of pickles, "spoon-meats" and "scouring materials," and the washing and starching of "tiffanies, lawns, black and white, sarsnet, points and other curious lace."

The following receipt I take from the chapter of the book that bears the heading—"Rare Curiosities not before made Publick."

"*To make a Dish seem a Pleasant Garden, or Pleasant Hill of Fruit and Flowers.*—Take a dish that is somewhat large, cover it with another of the like bigness, and place the uppermost over with

paste of Almonds, inlay'd with red, white, blew, and green Marmalade or Quiddany in the figure of flowers and banks; then take the branches of candied flowers, and fix them upright in order, and upon little bushes erected and covered with paste fix your preserved or candied Cherries, Plumbs, Pears, Apples, Gooseberries, Currans and the like, each in his proper place; and for leaves you may use coloured paste, wax, parchment, or horn, and this, especially in winter, will appear not only gloriously strange, but even strike, if it be well ordered, admiration in the beholders."

Nor can the author of *The Accomplished Ladies Rich Closet of Rarities* be held guilty of gratifying one sense at the expense of another; for I find that which follows among the "Rare and Curious Receipts"—

"*A Perfume wherewith to Perfume Confections, &c.* —Take of Myrrh a scruple, musk the like quantity, oyl of Nutmeg the like; infuse them in Rose-water, and with it sprinkle your banqueting preparatives, and the scent will be as pleasant as the taste."

XXVII.

NATURE'S influence and effect upon what the herbalists term the "passions of the hart," is a theme of which printed pages frequently treat, and true perchance it is, that Nature never did betray the heart that loved her; but that Nature is as fortunate in her lovers as her lovers be in Nature, I greatly doubt.

The loyalty to Nature is in most cases, I imagine, sorely tried when a human rival enters the lists. For the beauties of Nature we may have a profound attachment; we may derive acute pleasure from the sights and sounds that they afford; but how many of us, speaking candidly, could declare that there never yet was a face, or a voice, for the sight or the sound of which we would not unhesitatingly push from us our share of the flowers of the spring, of the songs of the birds, of all the sylvan year can offer from the first day of any January to any December's last? We may

hate ugliness and love beauty in the abstract. Snow-peaks, heathered hills, the music of the waves, of the rivers, sunset and sunrise, "effects," "tones," "relative values," these are important factors in our lives, or, at all events, we some of us hold them to be so. Still the æsthetic taste is, after all, I take it, a very secondary affair with even civilised human creatures. I bow down and worship the works of the old Italian painters. The sentiment of their pictures thrills me with an emotion akin to religious ecstasy; but I understand myself well enough to know that I would hurry to burn every masterpiece that art owes to the early Tuscan School if such were the only fuel available and some one in particular felt cold. Nor am I alone, I am afraid, in Vandalism underlying æsthetic veneer. The sight of a sooty chimney-sweep bearing his tools down the area steps of a London house, or that of a dishevelled servant sweeping clouds of dust through a doorway into the street, may, as signs of a wished-for return, quicken delight, compared to which hills and moorlands, hanging gardens, pictures, curios, cannot, as factors of happiness, hold a candle.

By strange tricks and devices is it that Love leads on the demure and fastidious. Appreciation of moral or mental worth lends to Love a cloak often enough, and Love for a while goes in the disguise. Then, lo and

behold, a day breaks when esteem for any one quality or attribute shows itself as but the outdoor garment, or the false colour in which the god flaunts for bewildering ends; and perfectly evident to the victim of the ruse it becomes that not this or that praiseworthy characteristic is it that subjugates or fascinates, but the entirety of the beloved one's being. Sacharissa is suddenly aware that, let Sir Plume do what he may, the power to alienate her does not remain: only the power to pain and humiliate. Sacharissa, the proudest of the proud, makes discovery of the truth at last; and asks herself affrighted and amazed, if it be she herself to whom has come this inexplicable bewitchment. Let the new-fangled women say whatever wild imaginings prompt, but without wrecking the whole structure it is impossible to take away the corner-stone of feminine nature. For myself, I would force every new-fangled woman to get by heart without further ado Fletcher's wondrously spirited song from *Valentinian*—

I.

"Hear ye, ladies, that despise
What the mighty Love has done;
Fear examples and be wise.
Fair Calisto was a nun;
Leda sailing on the stream
To deceive the hopes of man,

Love accounting but a dream,
  Doated on a silver swan;
Danaë in a brazen tower
Where no love was, loved a shower.

II.

Hear, ye ladies that are coy,
  What the mighty Love can do,
Fear the fierceness of the boy,
  The chaste moon he made to woo;
Vesta kindling holy fires,
  Circled round about with spies,
Never dreaming loose desires,
  Doting at the altar dies:
Illion, in a short hour, higher
He can build, and once more fire."

There is truth as well as melody bound in the metre of that song.

The following is a most valuable receipt, and but for the difficulty in mid-London of getting the grass of a fairy throne I would make trial of it this very minute—

"*A rare and precious Unguent which applied to the Eyes will enable you to behold all Fayries and Spirits whensoever encountered.*—Set one pint of sallet oyle in a vial glass, but first wash it with Marigold and Rose water; the flowers to be gathered towards the east. Wash it till the oyle becomes white, then set in a glasse and add thereto the budds of Hollyhocks,

the flowers of Marigold and of wild Thime, the budds of young Hazel. The Thime must be gathered near the side of a hill where fayries use to be; and take the grass of a fayrie throne. Then all these put into the oyle into the glasse, and set it to dissolve three days in the sunne, and keepe it for thy use."

The next may also prove of service to the overlooked.

"*To be assured safe from all Sorceries and Enchantment.*—Take Squilla and tie it upon the principal gate or doore of your house, and you shall assure all the inhabitants in it from Sorcerie and Enchantment."

I drove by Hyde Park Corner this morning. I like to see there Charity's proud motto. I like to see that vast and massive pile, St. George's Hospital (the site of which covers, I fancy, ground as valuable as any of London's costly acres) showing, as legend over the entrance to the huge building, the words—"SUPPORTED BY VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS."

TO A "REALIST."

("*The letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.*").

THE letter only doth thine art express,
Lacking the spirit, void and purportless:
An empty shrine, a lamp without a flame,
A lute from which no music ever came.

TO ——

("*The labourer is worthy of his hire.*")

"THE labourer is worthy of his hire,"
And for my toil I some return require.
On the performance of each arduous task,
To see you is the payment that I ask.

OF BEAUTY.

ALL loveliness is as an instrument
Of which the strings are sight, and sound, and scent;
And every string a varied note may strike,
But all belong unto the lute alike.
And joyous though the single note may be,
Yet it pertains to solemn minstrelsy;
And loveliness is unto us inwrought
With plaintive musing and with wistful thought.

OUT OF THE SPANISH.

(*To an invalid.*)

SPEAK not so ruthlessly of strength denied,
Scorn not days tuned to autumn's ruined tide;
Groves in their pride cast shadows on the grass,
Through leafless boughs the heaven-sent sunbeams pass.

XXVIII.

IT is a mistake, I think, to object to affectation. People who are guilty of small affectations being not, as a rule, vicious, and as perfection is impossible, perhaps it is well to accept willingly those failings in one's neighbours that are not provocative of disastrous results. Nor are the women who put themselves to the pain of small affectations often those who spend their lives plotting for their own advantage, regardless of the ruin such advantage may entail on others.

(Clara St. Quentin and the irritation she engenders is the peg on which I hang these reflections.)

The mind does one thing at a time mostly, and if it is occupied in remembering to scream on every conceivable occasion for alarm, and to display a sensibility it does not feel, the chance is that the owner of the mind in question has so found a safety-valve for her folly. Small and harmless follies are safety-valves

doubtless; and there is assuredly justice in the judgment of my cousin Julia, whose declaration it is that the love of fine clothes has been the salvation of many a woman.

I wish I could fix my thoughts upon my garments and keep them there. . . I wish I thought the curling of my hair after a particular fashion of immense moment . . . I wish . . . I wish . . . I wish . . . I wish the nine Muses might come into my room and render first aid to the wounded, for indeed I am suffering from the blues badly.

If now Melpomene, wearing her "tragic pantofles of red velvet and gold beset with pearls and sparks of rubies," to quote Mr. Peacham, would appear, I should be very glad of her company. Perhaps Thalia and I to-day would not be "birds of a feather." If only also I could hear the champing of Pegasus, and, opening the green swing-door, could admit the winged horse, how agreeable it would be; and the blues fade always when I can find employment in rhyming. But the winged horse does not come in answer to a common call. The Messenger Service boy cannot summon him; vain would it be to order him round as I used to order the carriage at two or three o'clock. I must bide his time and convenience, and then, when the humour takes him,

he will perchance approach. I will put on my "things," as the vulgar have it, so as not to keep the Muses' steed waiting should he deign to pay me a visit.

How are those fittingly clad whose steed is Pegasus? A singing robe should be ample, I think, and green strikes me as no bad colour. With the habits of other writers of minor verse I am not acquainted; but for myself I always put off my shoes preparatory to tagging a rhyme, and so if Pegasus needs spurring it is only with the heel of my stockinged foot that I can touch his side. I have a habit at such times, too, of resting my left hand upon the crown of my head. The wind is gusty as Pegasus takes his flight, and my hair, light and wild by nature, would fly a yard up and down and over my eyes did I not so hold it back. My right hand I twist in the mane of Pegasus; for between my absent-mindedness and the erratic course of the winged horse I should infallibly fall off were not the precaution mine of knotting my fingers in his flowing mane.

I wrote this morning for copies of two books. One is *Le Jardinier Solitaire, The Solitary or Carthusian Gardener;* being dialogues between a Gentleman and a Gardener. The other book, *A Compleat Body of Distilling*, by G. Smith of Kendall, in Westmore-

land (the date of the title-page of which is 1731) contains an "exact and accurate method of making all the compound cordial waters now in use." With these a third volume came unexpectedly, as well as a note from the sender of the packet, which runs as follows—"Also I beg to send on approval, *The Complete Vermin Killer*."

The Complete Vermin Killer has met already with my warmest approval. It is seemingly an interesting work, and bound up in the elastic refuge of its russet leather cover I find some truly curious matter. On the first hasty inspection of the chapters I have run across one labelled "the Compendious Gardener and Husbandman." The information that I give below I obtained from this source.

"*Preventive remedy against Mists and Fogs.*—At the four corners of your Garden or in the middle of it hang up the feathers of an Eagle . . . You will find them operate towards dispersing mists and fogs."

Has Mr. Browning's "eagle feather" folk-lore significance, I wonder?

I.

"Ah, did you once see Shelley plain?
And did he stop and speak to you?
And did you speak to him again?
How strange it seems and new!

II.

And you were living before that,
  And also you are living after;
And the memory I started at—
  My starting moves your laughter.

III.

I crossed a moor with a name of its own,
  And a certain use in the world, no doubt;
Yet a hand's-breadth of it shines alone
  Mid the blank miles round about:

IV.

For there I picked up on the heather,
  And there I put inside my breast,
A moulted feather, an eagle feather!
  Well, I forget the rest."

But to make my way again to the new old book. Therein I learn that pieces of iron and horse-shoes hung on trees are deemed efficacious against thunder, lightning and blasts; and that to cure madness in rabbits—will this information prove useful to me?—(a disorder discovered by their rolling on their backs and leaping in their hutches) a plentiful consumption of Thistles is requisite. The volume closes with a page of proverbs, inserted, the author says, as worthy of remembrance. From the number I will quote these—

"If the grass grows in Janiveer
  It grows the worse for 't all the year."

"March winds and May sun
Make clothes white and maids dun."

"When April blows his horn
It's good for hay and corn."

"A cold May and windy
Makes a full barn and findy."

Sincerely do I trust that we may see the truth of the final adage proved. We have certainly the May cold and windy. This morning snow was falling, though we are nearly through the month.

The rhyme I now write out has just occurred to me—

THE LAND OF LOVE.

Love is a precinct, not a god,
Starlit and paved with flower-sown sod.

Love is a maze, whose ingress lies
Secret from all but lovers' eyes.

Love is a song-beleaguered grove,
Where Philomel winds chants of love.

Love is a clime transfigured oft—
Storm, calm, fierce blasts and airs most soft.
(And blinding, baffling mists that rise
Veiling flowered lawns and starry skies.)

Love is a land beneath a spell,
Where fairies and magicians dwell.

Such mists as those of which my rhyme tells must surely be the mists that the feather of an eagle disperses. Let the sojourners in the land of enchantment put the "Compendious Gardener and Husbandman's" preventive remedy to the test.

XXIX.

I WENT to the hospital to-day. Just as I was setting forth, I encountered Clara St. Quentin; and when in answer to her questions I acquainted her with the nature of my errand, she displayed a shuddering amazement that the part of "lady visitor" was one that I could enact. "Oh, how *can* you go to such places, Miss Hardacre!" she cried. "You can't be so very soft-hearted, after all. I am foolishly sympathetic perhaps, but I really could not endure to see so much suffering. I make other people's troubles so much my own, that I should be positively ill—haunted by it all, for days afterwards—if I attempted anything of the sort. I always say that no one really sensitive *could* be a doctor. Any but blunt natures would be quite upset by the dreadful sights, I am sure."

The Priest and the Levite who came, once on a time, down that road from Jerusalem to Jericho,

doubtless were of Clara's way of thinking. Wanting indeed in fastidiousness and refinement, if one comes to think of it, was the Good Samaritan; and soiling and destructive to the trappings of a well-turned-out beast was the burden set upon the creature mentioned in the parable. Smudged with dust, wounded and bleeding, the man who fell among thieves was assuredly an execrable spectacle to a passer-by of elegant taste and nice perception. But mockery apart, from what error and folly do these utterances of Clara's spring? As to my callousness, she may be right. I do not know that I am soft-hearted, but in taking my visits to the hospital as a token of this callousness she is utterly at fault. I am, in Clara's phraseology, "haunted by it all" too sometimes—if by "all" she would signify that pain that does and must exist, and is but hidden from us by a certain number of brick walls. Sometimes in the night, when I cannot sleep, before my inward eyes (not always "the bliss of solitude") rise up the ghosts of those dim hospital-wards studded with white beds, in each of which lies some poor wreck from the troublous sea of life. Surely want of imagination as well as want of compassion enables us to live on, week in and week out, not lifting a finger to help, not speaking a word to comfort and strengthen.

By means of its simplicity and directness, the diction of the poor, much oftener, I think, strikes the pathetic chord, than does the vocabulary of the scholar. A man who will never leave the hospital alive, the nurses say, told me this afternoon of his wife's last illness in this wise—

"I never grudged her anything, miss, and it came to my knowledge that she was a-fretting for her mother to be with her, but she would not let me know it because of the expense. And I said to her, 'Mary, you are taking on for the want of your mother, but you shall have her with you, no mistake.' And she said to me, 'Oh, John, think of the expense, and all that I have cost you, laid up so long.' And I said to her, 'Mary, I had nothing when we met, and if I have nothing when we part it won't be for that I'd fret.' And I got her mother to her, miss, and she stayed with her to the end, and when I laid her in her grave my last shilling was gone, but, as I said to her, it wasn't for that I'd fret."

It cannot be so saddening to hear such words as these as it is to listen to talk suggestive of the belief that human nature is ruthlessly mercenary, self-seeking, and given over to the pursuit of worldly gains and vanities.

No sooner was I at home than I received a visit

from Lady Hightowers, who, on the strength of a distant cousinship (she is of the generation of our parents), usually treats Antony and myself with effusive affection; addressing Antony, indeed, in tones of caressing fondness that have the trick of recalling to my mind the accents in which an admiring owner cajoles a pet dog.

"How delighted I am to find myself here again, Bethia," she cried, embracing me first on one cheek and then on the other. "And where is my dearest Antony? And how charming your room looks—so quaint and comfortable. Do send for Antony, dear child, for I cannot stay with you for half the time that I should love to spend here, and I would not lose the pleasure of his company for a single minute either." The uninitiated would have imagined that the stern exigencies of a relentless fate alone could serve to prevent the frequent repetition of a meeting fraught with so much delight; and till Antony obeyed the summons, Lady Hightowers poured forth ecstatic expressions of the satisfaction that the sight of me afforded, intermingled with apologies for not having crossed our threshold before since she came to London. (Three months have elapsed since she took up her abode within a mile of our door.)

"You are sensible people," she cried. "You go your

own way, and are not slaves of the absurd social treadmill. Dear me, how much I should enjoy your quiet restful life with all these delightful old books: a Herbal do you say that is, Bethia? I really have not a moment to call my own from morning till night. Hightowers, you know, will not give me any help, and the choice lies between keeping the poor girls moping at home, or taking them out when I am as tired as a dog. Ah! here is dear Antony. Antony, you have quite forsaken us. We have not met for months." (Simple-minded as Antony is, even he has come to recognise the fact that whilst his far-away cousins remain unmarried, a frequent turning of his steps Park Lane-wards would swiftly bring to a close the succession of pressing invitations which interviews with Lady Hightowers—as things now are —evoke.) "And Cicely tells me that you have quite dropped her also," Lady Hightowers went on; "she too was lamenting your shocking want of friendliness the other day."

"Her Grace is very good," Antony answered. He smiled as he spoke, and the airiness of his tone might have passed muster with the "general public"; but voices are of all properties hardest of management, and I could plainly detect an underlying embarrassment, as likewise, I have little doubt, could Lady

Hightowers. Since Cicely Towers' marriage to an owner of strawberry-leaves, her name has never voluntarily passed Antony's lips ; and I always remember that there had been a period, covering a few months before the announcement of this event, during which Lady Hightowers' cordiality had been, to say the least, quite in abeyance. "I really must see more of you both," she now continued. "Promise, Antony, to bring her to luncheon on Sunday."

At this moment who should be ushered into the room but Mrs. Goodall: she, Antony holds, invariably rings the bell and demands ingress if, when passing our house, she sees a carriage standing before the door.

I had no intention of introducing Mrs. Goodall to Lady Hightowers. I endeavoured to hold converse with her myself, leaving Antony to entertain our other visitor; but this, I very soon saw, by no means fell in with Mrs. Goodall's own wishes in the matter. To me she scarcely pretended to listen, but sat with every nerve strained to catch the conversation of the other speakers; only looking occasionally towards me for the purpose of certain dumb show, signifying, I was perfectly aware, a command to effect an introduction. Lady Hightowers can be exceedingly rude. I did not wish poor old Mrs. Goodall, tiresome

as she is, to fall a victim to a mercilessly insolent tongue, and so held it better to be credited with an extraordinary want of perception and an astounding blindness to signs and signals, rather than be the means of putting violent ends to Mrs. Goodall's social aspirations and delights. At last, however, she could bear the condition of affairs no longer, and raising her voice, said impressively—"I think that Mr. Goodall had the pleasure of meeting Lord Hightowers at a board-meeting last week."

Lady Hightowers talked on for a minute or two as if she heard not; and finding her primal advance unheeded, Mrs. Goodall repeated the attack. "I think, Lady Hightowers," she said, in still more forcible tones, "that Mr. Goodall had the pleasure of meeting Lord Hightowers at a board-meeting last week."

"*Who* is Mr. Goodall?" Lady Hightowers put the question in her suavest accent.

"Oh, you have often heard of Mr. Goodall," I exclaimed hastily. I felt, I confess, nervous. There was a certain look in Lady Hightowers' grey eyes, for which brutal—in the French sense of the word—is the only close-fitting adjective. "You must have heard my father often speak of Mr. Goodall, I am sure."

"I think not, Bethia dearest," was Lady Hightowers' response. "And what was it that you were telling me about this most interesting Society of Painter-Etchers, Antony?"

When a few minutes later she rose to go, with many declarations of the grief that "tearing" herself away cost her, Lady Hightowers, with her arm about my waist, drew me from the room. "I must just have a glimpse of the studio," she said. "I dare say it is full of perfectly charming things. What barracks our houses are compared to yours. But who in the world is that dreadful woman, Bethia, and why does she come here?"

I explained that the family law business has always been in the hands of Mr. Goodall, "the dreadful woman's" husband, and that he is, I believe, a distant relation of our father's.

"She is very, very dreadful," Lady Hightowers rejoined. "I would probably engage her if I wanted a housekeeper. She looks what one calls, in writing a servant's character, respectable, but I could not endure her for a moment in any other capacity. You are far too sweet, Bethia."

I always affirm that of all the squandered expenditure in this extravagant world, there is no commodity more lavishly wasted than is pity. On my return to

the drawing-room I did not, as I expected and feared, find Mrs. Goodall in either the fever of wrath or the collapse of humiliation. On the contrary, smiling the while complacently, she greeted me with cordial praises of the just-departed guest.

"What a peculiarly charming person Lady Hightowers is," she said in tones of warm approval. "I should call her exceptionally pleasing. And did you notice her cloak, Bethia? It was something quite new. I wonder if my last winter's would cut up into the same shape? It surprised me though, I must say, that you did not introduce us properly. You surely *must* have understood from my little gestures that I was prepared for it, and it was quite evident that she did not know who I was, though my name was announced when I came in. I think there would be sufficient of the plush; and the same trimming could go on again—only put up the back instead of down the front."

This receipt is pretty, I think. I got it from one of my old books—

"*To perfume Clothes.*—Take the best Cloves an ounce, dry them in an oven, and beat them to powder. Do the same by the like quantity of the

wood of Rheubarb and Cedar, and sprinkle them in your box or chest, and they will not only cast a curious Scent but likewise preserve them against Moths."

I do not want to be horrid, but in the privacy of this page I will admit that my old books, by force of contrast with Mrs. Goodall, seem more than ever engaging to-night.

XXX.

IMAGINATION may outstrip waking limits in dreams, but the same cannot be said of humour, if the experience of other dreamers resembles my own.

I joked in sleep the other night, and certainly—dreaming, at all events—it is with difficulty that my wits perform the function. Yet, dreaming, was I enraptured with my drollery, and found my *bon mot* so exquisitely funny as to laugh myself awake in its honour.

A little while ago I lost a gold sleeve-link, and made the welkin ring with lamentation in consequence. Awake I spoke of the disaster as the loss of a sleeve-link; but in my dream, when telling the story of my woes, I referred to my lost property as *the missing link*, and, as I have already stated, discovered such excellent entertainment in my jest as to break my sleep with the merriment it engendered.

I was relating this experience to a friend this morning. She, who is rather a purist in the matter of pronunciation, gave me in return for mine her last night's dream. She dreamt, she told me, that she was grievously cast down and disturbed by being peremptorily informed that the correct pronunciation of *ch* is *k*, and that in speaking of the name Churchill as other than Kirkkill, she had been frequently guilty of a grave solecism.

As to dreams, our dreams sometimes apparently are pregnant with meaning that our dreaming faculties provide yet do not realise. Once, after a sleepless time, I tried change of domicile as a remedy for wakefulness, and took up my abode under another roof. The night following sleep came quickly to me, and with my first sleep I dreamt this dream.

I dreamt I was in the room in which I truly lay, and that I heard the sound of running water in the house. And I thought I rose up and went to see if I could find the origin of the sound; and I thought that having searched vainly I returned to my room. There I thought I saw beside the bed a nymph standing, with scarlet full blown Poppies twisted through her dusky hair. And I thought I said to her, "Who are you?" and that she answered, "I am Lethe." Now in my dream I saw no connecting link in the sound

of the river of water and of the wreath of Poppies with Lethe.

On another occasion I dreamt a dream within a dream. I dreamt that some one (I will not write the name lest Mrs. Goodall should pounce upon it) came to see me. The *mise-en-scène* of the dream was this room, and the entrance and greeting of the actor on this dream's stage were just such as memory could afford. Then suddenly the player of the principal part fainted; and I thought that, roused by emotion and dismay, I awoke, and awake considered the case. "Fool that I am," I thought I told myself, "instead of letting consternation awake me, I ought, of course, to have poured a cordial down the swooner's throat." But how could I administer a cordial? I thought I asked myself, distraught. The catastrophe had occurred in a dream, and only in a dream could I go to the rescue once more. Through sleep and dreams alone could I render aid. And I thought that in furious haste I flung myself back into sleep again, in the hope that dreaming I might accomplish the desired end. And there my dream ended.

A wish was once granted to me in a dream. I previously had spent many weeks laid on a bed of sickness, during which time the four walls of my room had sometimes seemed of no London builder's

brick-and-a-half construction, but solid masonry of limitless solidity. Of an evening above all, that restlessness which is bred of weakness would come upon me, and I would feel the caged, prisoned feeling, as if my mortal frame were in truth the cell of Little Ease. One evening especially was I filled with unrest, and with one of illness's wilful vagaries. I was telling myself repeatedly that if I could but see the old Italian pictures in the National Gallery once more I could contentedly be quiet for a long while again. Night came, and night opened a vision. I dreamt that the wall to the head of my bed fell away, and the plains of heaven were disclosed to me. Heaven, as I saw it, was in the likeness of the heaven that Botticelli and Fra Angelico pictured. But no canvas ever made visible to me the loveliness that the dream accorded. There loveliness surpassed all loveliness that awake I have looked upon, as, I like to think, Botticelli's and Fra Angelico's conception perhaps surpassed even the master craftsmen's powers of achievement with the medium of canvas and brush. But this was not all that the night showed.

"Cannot you even now be still?" I thought some one at my side said, as I stirred, and, for a moment, half turned away.

"I am just looking back once into my room,"

I thought I answered. "There is a rainbow there."

The vision of the night had given me all I asked and more. Through the breach in the wall to the east I saw heaven; and blotted out by a rainbow was the wall to the west on which day after day I had wearily looked.

I took that dream as coming from a power that with some goes by the title of Providence: with others by a name which is sacred, not profane. How far behind the times in belief I am.

Of Bethia Hardacre

TO A. H.

Who put to me the question.

WHY is our power to feel so strong?
Our power to do so slight?
One to the finite does belong,
One to the infinite

TO ——

SINCE you are mute 'tis always winter here,
So are you harsher than the sylvan year;
For through her frosts we know the time must come
When birds long silent are no longer dumb.

BY SIR PLUME

When prudence bade him burn Sacharissa's letters.

'TIS said from fire that once sweet Roses came,
White from the ashes, crimson from the flame:
If this were so, surely that pile was lit
With scrolls like these, by one as well-loved writ.

XXXI.

THIS morning I went to sit in the garden of the square.

One sight therein, now evident, rather distressed me —contradictory as it is to the evidence of the herbalists on the subject. The Mulberry-trees are in fuller leaf than is the Weeping Ash. Now the herbalists term the Mulberry-tree "the wisest tree," because, as Lyte says, "in the faining of poets is the Mulberie the wisest of all trees, for this tree only among others bringing forth his leaves after the cold frosts be passed, so that by means thereof it is not hurt or hindered as other trees be." It is really too mortifying to find the Mulberry gone so silly as to put forth leaves before the Ash, thereby placing the herbalists in the light of false witnesses. I wonder if Spenser is right, and that rhymesters would eat of the fruit of the tree with advantage—

"With love juice stained the Mulberie,
The fruit that dewes the poet's braine."

This cannot be certainly foretold perhaps, since Culpeper confidently declares that "Mercury rules the Mulberie-tree, and therefore its efforts are variable as are his."

Whilst I was in the garden a little girl ran to and fro beneath the gnarled boughs of the Mulberry-tree and across the sunlit lawn in pursuit of a white butterfly. At first the child, in hot haste and by aid of main force, attempted the butterfly's capture; failing, however, by such means to accomplish that upon which it was plain her heart was set. By and by she tried another plan. Cajolery was called into play—

"It is not strength that always wins,
For wit doth strength excel."

The butterfly could be entangled perhaps, though not overtaken in a fair race. The child evidently noted that from Dandelion to Dandelion was it that the white butterfly floated—a shimmer of silver wings poised on golden blossom was what I saw, but I do not think the child's impression was the same. She gathered a Dandelion-flower and softly approached the butterfly. The ruse succeeded, and for one second her toy was in her hand. Then, in swifter flight than I had yet witnessed, the silver wings

soared away over the Mulberry-trees and out of sight. Till ensnared, one might almost have fancied that the butterfly enjoyed the chase, and had entered into the spirit of a game with the child—never fluttering far, yet never wholly within reach. It was less the part of Psyche than of Eros that this butterfly, symbol of the soul, played.

The poor child: I hope the scene of which I was a spectator held in it no omen of what the years will bring. I wish in some respects a boy and not a small girl had performed in the garden pageant, but heaven defend (for no mortal could) the butterfly in such a case. Once within the grasp of the boy, the unhappy thing, if escaping at all, would not have escaped unhurt, or in the temper to pursue its airy, fetterless way as before the encounter.

Last night the wind blew down one of the old trees in the garden, and now it lies prone, crushing many a Daisy—the Daisy that "is so sweet"—in the grass. The trunk is very big in circumference, and the tree must be very old. To see the mighty fallen is to me a melancholy spectacle, but when I discussed the matter with a nursery-maid in charge of some babies my opinion received no support.

"Inside it is quite rotten," she said. "They ought to have taken it down a long while ago."

Of Bethia Hardacre

There Demos spoke from the lips of the trim and pretty nurserymaid. That the omnipotent "they" ought to have taken down most things a long long while ago is quite the opinion of Demos. There is no romance, no sentiment in Demos. Lest a tree should fall and injure a hair of Demos' hydra head, let not the axe stay till the grove, root and branch, is gone.

Mr. Evelyn's paper on the "Sacredness of Groves" would meet with no response from Demos. A potato field is better than a grove. Let us rid ourselves of every grove. "They" ought to have taken them down a long while ago.

XXXII.

I ACCOMPLISHED a visit to Lady Hightowers this afternoon.

"Not real flowers, real flowers are untidy looking," she said, during a discussion the theme of which was the decoration of a ball-gown. "You must have artificial, darling, must she not, Bethia dearest? They will last."

Yes, Lady Hightowers is quite right. Sylvia will be wise in garnishing her dancing-robes with sham blossoms fabricated by tattered men and women in the workshops, not by the great god Pan in the clearing of the wood. The false does in sundry instances survive when the real fails. An hour or two in the hot air of a brilliantly lighted ball-room, and lo and behold, the Snowdrops and Wind-flowers, though but just before gathered, will faint and fade. And the product of artificial conditions,

the "golden lads and girls" and their golden elders, display generally, with of course exceptions, a fine palmy grace, a sleek and shapely air of well-being, that, so far as my experience reaches, is the distinguishing mark only of carpet knights and fine madams and misses. And yet I have frequently listened to words which, were the speakers correct in their surmises, pointed to labour as the panacea for all the ills that flesh is heir to.

Idleness may be injurious to the mind, but, in spite of the allegations of experts to the contrary, I cannot, with the evidence of my own eyes to support me, believe that the drones and butterflies suffer peculiarly in bodily health. Freedom from enforced labour and from the drudgery of the inevitable treadmill of course gives morbid fancy the chance of free play. Surplus time also enables the nervous sufferer to publish more numerous and minute bulletins than would otherwise be possible. We hear far more about it, no doubt. Every neuralgic twinge, every neurotic sensation, can be the motive of an hour's discourse, if so the well-to-do victim will. But from this it does not follow that perfect health would replace nervous whims did toil for daily bread become compulsory. Of the world's hard workers—be the work mental or physical, undertaken of necessity

or by inclination—the intelligence we get is as a rule of another nature. Frequent reports telling of nights docked of their fair allowance of sleep, of queer pains shifty as quicksilver are not then promulgated. The tidings in such cases, it seems to me, are usually unheralded notices, bolts from the blue, announcing that he or she is dead or dying.

A life of idleness and frivolity is, of course, ignoble, but the contemptible rusting out process is not apparently a brief one; and had we in enforced and strenuous work the *Aqua Mirabilis* of the old writers, the jaded mien and bearing of the toilers on labour bent would not contrast so unfavourably as actually they do with the aspect of the mummers in Vanity Fair drawing-rooms. Contentment may not be frequently evident in the case of either class; but in the latter acknowledged ill-health alone stamps its victims with the harassed, exhausted appearance so common to humanity in the factories and workshops and East ends of the world.

An hour ago I received a letter from my cousin Ferdinand's wife. Poor Julia is a believer in the doctrine that want of occupation is the moth that frets away not soul only, but body. I say *poor* Julia, because this conclusion of hers is unhappily drawn from a premise that Ferdinand's life affords.

Of Bethia Hardacre

Since Ferdinand left the army, now nearly fifteen years ago, the reading of newspapers and the carrying round of prescriptions to the chemist have formed the staple occupation of his life. "If he had a sick wife and ten delicate children to support, he would be perfectly well, I believe," Julia writes in the letter that I have just received from her. "His last notion," she goes on to explain, "is that he is suffering from that dreadful disease, something ataxy, because a man who was in his regiment is dying of it; and he is always making experiments of some test for the malady he has heard of somehow—trying if he sways when he stands up with his eyes shut and his feet together. The other day a woman came to see me, and found him in the drawing-room with closed eyes and extended arms. He thought it was I coming into the room, and he called out, 'I *do* sway, Julia.' I am sure that Mrs. Baxendale thought him mad. It is so tiresome. If *only* he had something to do. There is one piece of advice that I give you: whoever you marry, don't marry a man who does not work. Idleness is the bane of human existence. I am absolutely certain that Ferdinand would have nothing in the world the matter with him if he had to slave from early morning till late at night."

Such experiences must be indeed exasperating to Julia, whose energy overflows from her own house into a dozen others, and who of late has grown reckless in her disregard of personal ease. I cannot say so to her, but really what I think of Ferdinand is that if the sick wife and ten delicate children were truly in existence, and depending on him for support, he would head the sorry flock workhouseward. There must surely be a want of moral or mental if not physical stamina to make endurable so futile a life as his, by choice, is.

Poor Julia, her perception of the ludicrous comes to her rescue sometimes ; but it is hardly, I suppose, with the object of keeping a laughing-stock always at hand that women marry.

Of Bethia Hardacre

XXXIII.

WOULD any one learn how to make metheglin, this is one of Sir Kenelm Digby's ways—

"In twenty gallons of water boyle Sweet-Brier leaves, Eyebright, Rosemary, Bays, Clove-Gillyflowers, of each five handfuls, and four Eringo roots. To every two gallons and a half of this decoction put one gallon of honey, boyle it, &c. When it is tunned up, hang in it a bag containing five handfuls of Clove-Gillyflowers, and sufficient quantity of the spices above."

I have in my possession two volumes, upon the title-pages of which Sir Kenelm Digby's name figures. One *The Closet of the eminently famed Sir Kenelme Digby, Kt., Opened;* the other his *Choice and Experimented Receipts in Physick and Chirurgery.* From well-nigh every page of the first-named little book we can pull a nosegay of herbs and flowers—

Rosemary, Sweet-Marjoram, wild Thyme, Scabious, Eglantine, Marigolds, Wood-Sorrel, Woodbine, Lily of the Valley, Clove-Gillyflowers, Betony, Wallflowers, French Cowslips, St. John's-wort, Meadow-Sweet, Rue.

The author gives "My lady Morice's receipt for Meath," and follows it up by another prescription of which the heading runs—"My lady Morice, her sister, makes hers thus." "If you will have your Meath cooling," Sir Kenelm also informs his readers, "use Violets and Strawberry-leaves, Agrimony, Eglantine, and the like; adding Borage and Bugloss, and a little Rosemary and Sweet-Marjoram to give it vigour."

What a pretty bit of reading the correspondence between Sir Kenelm Digby and Sir Thomas Browne is.

XXXIV.

JULIA came to see me this morning. She has not long since returned from Paris; whilst there, she saw the pictures in the Salon. What she told me made me wish to go and see what she saw. I would like to see the flower-pieces in the Salon; for French people seemingly can paint flowers as no one on this side of the water can. Julia says that some of the pictures of flowers are excellent, and that to look at them even would be a help to me. English people are queerly incapable in some respects. It is strange that there should be no one who can paint flowers in England as many a French artist can. And instead of the abominable subjects the French painters have chosen lately, there is a fashion among them for flower-painting now, my cousin says, and the flowers are vivid and transparent both. I would really go to Paris if I could, and look at them.

It seems to me that whoever could paint stained

glass ought to be able to paint flowers, and for this belief I have Mr. Ruskin's authority, I think. I do not mean whoever could paint the glass in the first instance, but whoever could represent stained glass. Flowers are nearly as transparent as is such glass. The petals of purple Iris are quite as transparent; so are the petals of many Tulips. I have just held against the light the petal of a crimson Tulip and one of a purple Iris, and both are quite as transparent as is stained glass. The petal of a white Iris against the light has the effect of glass most finely powdered with silver, with here and there, in the shadow, a touch of gold. Among flowers of state there can be no lovelier flower, in form and texture, than is the white Iris. Set where the light falls through it, as it falls through those in my window at which I am looking now, it is perfectly beautiful; and the wonderfully graceful drooping lines that the flowers show, contrasted with the defiant sword-like leaves, give the Iris, from the decorative point of view, a foremost place.

The white Iris is one of the flowers that the Greeks set about their tombs; it is also one of the flowers sacred to the Virgin, and assigned as appropriate to the Annunciation. The Iris was the Flower-de-Luce of the English botanical writers from the time of the publication of *The Grete Herbal* in 1521 till the end

of the eighteenth century. Pomet, "chief druggist to the French King," writing early in the eighteenth century, speaks of the white Florentine Orrice as a plant known in France as the Flower-de-Luce. "They say," he adds, "there are flowers of it of various colours which resemble in some kinds the rainbow which is called 'Iris.'" After speaking of the medicinal virtue of orris-root, "it is used outwardly," he says, "in sweet powder for the hair, and in damask powder and Cypress powder." In the *Flora Domestica*, published in 1823, the white Iris is spoken of as known in French by the name of "la flambe blanche." "The white torch" or "flame" seems to catch and cast into the mould of poetic language the spirit of the Iris, and by such a name the flower was known long ago; for Lyte, the date of whose title-page is 1619, quotes it. "That kinde with the white floure," he states, "is called of the most part Iris Florentina: in shops Ireos (especially the dryed roots, by the which name it is knowne of the Cloth-workers and Drapers; for with these they use to trim their clothes to make them sweet and pleasant). In English, white Floure-de-Luce, and of some it is Florentine and the roots be commonly called Ireos; in Italian, Giglio bianche: in French, Flambe blanche."

And so the verdict (taken from the evidence of contemporary writers) seems to go against the upholders of the theory that the Fleur-de-Luce was a Lily. The classification of plants in the sixteenth and seventeenth century was, according to modern ideas, so erratic and elastic that Shakespeare might well have set the Fleur-de-Luce as cousin german to the Lily.

> "Lilies of all kinds,
> The Flower-de-Luce being one."

But certainly as an Iris, not as a Lily, does the Fleur-de-Luce figure in the pages of botanists contemporary with Shakespeare; we may feel pretty sure, therefore, that in Perdita's Flower-de-Luce we have an Iris.

It was Julia who gave to me the bird of India, and I asked her this morning if she could afford me any information as to his antecedents. But she could not. His origin is shrouded in unfathomable mystery. He came, she knows, from a holy temple, and is very, very old; but that is the extent of her knowledge. All the while that she was in India she never saw another like him, she says. The craftsman evidently broke the mould after fashioning him, and never repeated himself, therein following Nature's procedure when she creates what is truly great.

XXXV.

THE aroma of long-vanished herb-gardens, of flowery pleasaunces, of days when minds and methods were less sophisticated than they be at present, seems to linger still between the sombre covers of the time-stained volumes that treat of "Conceited Receipts and rare Secrets." Surely, as I turn the leaves, Sacharissa must be looking over my shoulder to catch another glimpse of the well-read pages: Sacharissa or Corinna—of a-Maying fame—or some young madam of quality whose apparel is of lawn, tiffany, and lute-string, and who will don no nineteenth century hat, but a hood, should it be her fancy presently to go forth and gather simples. Can any one deny that Herrick's Julia once upon a time, by means of the following receipt, alleviated her lover's pain in the head, when prolonged frolicking in the sunshine had engendered the "grief"?—

"*Marigold-flowers distilled: good for the paine in the head.*—Take Marigold-flowers and distil them, then take a fine cloth and wet in the aforesaid distilled water, and so lay it to the forehead of the patient, and being so applied let him sleep if he can: this with God's help will ease the paine."

The Golden Treasury edition, somehow, omits the charming pagan thanksgiving, which assuredly the poet composed on awakening refreshed; and—with the fine cloth wet with distilled Marigold-flower water still bound about his temples—submitted to his dearest Girl. The Editor should look to it.

Prew, his maid, put herself to the trouble, doubtless, of ensuring that the glebe kitchen-garden stuff included specimens of the plants named below—

"*The Herbs to be distilled for Usequebath.*—Take Agrimony, Furmitory, Betony, Bugloss, Wormwood, Hartstongue, Cardmus Benedictus, Rosemary, Angelica, Tormentil, of each of these for every gallon of ale one handful."

A quaint flavour, or old world perfume clings to each of the following "conceited secrets," I think—

"*The Lord Treasurer's receipt for an Ague.*—Take a quantity of Plaintain, shred it and double distil it, and take six or eight spoonfuls of the water with so much Borage-water, with a little sugar and

one nutmeg, and drink it warm in the cold fit; by God's help it will cure you."

"*To Brighten and Enliven the Eye.*—Take Vervain, Pelitory of the Wall, Smalage and Betony with the flowers of Eye-bright. Distil them and wash the eyes with the water morning and evening, and it will not only render them bright and clear, but will give a true respect and dimension to the decayed sight."

"*To Render the Skin clear and of a very fair Complexion.*—Take Bean blossoms, or the water distilled from the Vine, with the flowers of Fumitory. Distil them, and make a washe with what proceeds therefrom."

The touch of romance is not absent, perhaps, from the receipts I inscribe next. Who reading them cannot clearly conjure up the vision of some pale thing, pulling and preparing their ingredients, against her lover's return from the wars: and so busied striving to wile away the long, sunny, anxious hours of spring?

"*A Wound Drink.*—Take Southernwood, Wormwood, Bugloss, Mugwort, White-bottle, Sanicle, Plantane, Dandelion, Cinquefoil, Ribwort, Wood-Betony, Clary roots, Avens (called Herb Bennet), Hawthorn-buds, Agrimony, Oak-leaves and buds, Bramble-buds,

wild Angelica, Mints, Scabious, Strawberry leaves, Violet leaves, Comfrey, of each twenty handfuls; gather them in May, and dry them in a room without much fire; turn them often that they do not become musty, and when they are dry put them up in Canvas bags severally. Then take of these several herbs so dried of each three handfuls, and put them into two quarts of running water, and one quart of white wine; boyle them to three pints. Straine the liquor from the herbs, and put thereto one pint of Honey, which boyle again taking away the froth; then straine it and keep it in a glass bottle close stopped."

"*To heal a fresh Wound with Speed.*—Take the leaves of Columbine, Nettles, Plaintain, Ribwort, Wormwood, red Roses, Betony, Violets, of each one handful, wash them clean and beat them well with the white of an egg and straine out the juyce through a cloth, to which juyce put the quantity of two walnuts of honey and half an ounce of Frankinsense; stir them very well together and put it in a box and use it Plaster-wise."

Anxious times were those years of strife for women at home, waiting, poor souls, for tidings. Did Lucasta or Castara, wakeful with suspense, get sleep after the method here promised? I hope so.

"*To Procure Sleepe.*—Take red Rose cakes with some red Rose-water, and let it heate till it be thick, and bind some of it to the Temples, and some to the soles of the feet."

I will close what I write to-day with this Electuary for the Passion of the Heart—

"*An Electuary for the Passion of the Heart.*—Take Damask Roses half blown, cut off their whites, and stamp them very fine, and strain out the juyce very strong; and moisten it in the stamping with a little Damask Rose-water. Then put thereto fine powder Sugar, and boyl it gently to a thin syrup. Then take the powders of Amber, Pearle and Rubies, of each half a dram, Ambergreece, one scruple, and mingle them with the said syrup till it be somewhat thick, and take a little thereof on a knife's point morning and evening."

XXXVI.

WHEN I am dead and gone, Antony, or whoever is my "residuary legatee," will make discovery of a document stored in my big ivory and sandal-wood box, in place of being set away in the drawers of the bureau that contains other papers outwardly of a like nature—receipted bills. The receipted bill in question that I have laid among chattels unconnected with commerce is made out after this fashion—

"To one best leather collar, plate engraved ROGER."

When I came again to London from the region I call Arabia, after hearing poor Roger's story, I could not free my mind from the haunting recollection of the patient look with which Roger always waited for the return of his master who is dead.

I felt as if I must take action on Roger's behalf. But there was no action that I could take really;

there seldom is, I think, when the desire to minister is very strong. I could do nothing for Roger for which he would have a liking. He had his own people to care for him, and they saw carefully, I knew, to all his wants. I could not resist, though, the relief of exertion in his service, however disproportionate in this as in many another instance the result might be to the emotion that inspired it. I went to the shop, nicest in such ware that I knew, and there ordered the making of a collar, with the name "Roger" engraved upon the plate. This collar I sent to the owner of the house in Arabia which was Roger's home.

The owner of the house wrote in answer to the letter that accompanied the offering. "Roger," she said, "seemed surprised at first by the collar, but afterwards he looked pleased." I remember that reading of Roger's surprise I laughed with that sense of amusement that is accompanied by a pang of the wincing order. Roger's surprise reminded me of other affairs. It was not the first time that a deed, prompted by an emotion allied to that with which Roger's bereavement stirred me, had excited surprise.

When last I wrote in my book of Roger, I said I should be glad when the waiting for him was over. It is over now. It was not so very, very long, after

all, that he had to wait for what the bystanders knew, though they could not bring the knowledge to his understanding, that he waited for in this world in vain. Perhaps it would have been worse for him if he could clearly have known that down the road towards which he was always expectantly looking his master would never come. Worse for him, maybe, but less distressing to the onlookers, who, as matters were, watched him wait. To Roger, as sometimes to ourselves, fuller knowledge might have meant but additional distress. We are ready enough to believe that we cannot endure suspense, but when bereavement's certainty comes the suspense which carried with it even the shadow of hope seems happiness contrasted with the grim inflexible doom. Once, when I was in Arabia, I leant close over Roger, and putting my arm about his neck, I said—

"Roger, do not always be waiting. Poor dog, your master cannot come." Roger wagged his tail for reply, and turned his wistful gaze once more towards the road.

And now, to-day, from the owner of the house in Arabia, I have received the tidings of Roger's death. "To the last," the letter ran, "the old dog would not go up the stairs. In the hayloft it was he died, for in the house he would not let us take him up the

stairs. The children have another little dog now, that they will like to show Miss Hardacre."

I have no wish to see the other little dog. It was Roger's nature that touched me. He was capable of caring so much, and of still caring when his affection had nothing to sustain it but his own memory and heart. There is pathos in the sight of an all-absorbing devotion, quite disinterested, and asking for nothing in return. And the word pathos suits, I think, the case; for what is pathos but the Greek for suffering, and what but suffering is usually the penalty of falling down and worshipping a frail human thing?

"Vacant heart and hand and eye,
Easy live and quiet die."

The Wizard of the North understood that well.

OF TWO TRAVELLERS.

I AM indifferent to you, and feel sure
Your safety and well-being are secure.
I love you, and ten thousand perils see,
Each one preventing your return to me.

For a brief while, once, the silver clasps of my box, in which the bill for Roger's collar lies with sundry other objects of sentiment, closed also over a little gold locket, cast in the form of a heart, and bearing for inscription the letter "B." It was placed in my hand

by my uncle, the Professor of all Philosophies, when, during a severe illness, the doctors believed that there was no revoking his death-warrant. My mother had a younger sister, for whose sake, my uncle—our father's brother—has lived through life alone. After my aunt Bethia (who died, report says, heartbroken) I am named. My grandmother, who ruled husband, children, and dependants with a rod of iron, married my aunt in her nineteenth year—knowing the while that her affections were given to our uncle—to a brute who, when her dead child was but a few hours born, forced himself into her room and terrified her to the pitch of delirium. My mother's old nurse has told me of how the Bethia of that generation rose up from her bed again, with a scared look in her eyes, and the deep melancholy into which she had previously sunk intensified, and now never for a moment lightened. "Your grandmamma had said," old Hannah repeated, "that she would be well enough when the child came, but I knew differently; I knew she would never be well in this world. And, Miss Betty, when she could escape, back to the old nursery she would come, and sit on the floor with her pretty head resting against my knee and say, 'Hold my hand tight, Nursey; it makes me feel more safe,' and never a word more for an hour at a time. And when she died, I for

one, thanked God for taking her away—she who had once been the gayest and brightest of them all."

Two years from the date of her marriage was it that my aunt died. Every cause, it is said, has its victims. In our family my aunt Bethia was the victim that the marriage-of-affection cause claimed. So long as her memory remains green, none of her stock will share her fate. My grandmother's tyrannical code seemed buried in her youngest child's grave. She permitted the marriage of my father and mother, though my father was a comparatively poor man, with no handle to his name. And so my aunt did not suffer, as very likely she believed, in vain. Hapless marred lives, ruined by the mistakes or misconduct of others, never are lived in vain, I suppose. They serve at least as danger-signals to those in authority, and to those in whose keeping is, humanly speaking, the happiness of their fellow-creatures. Such existences are object-lessons, warnings of the catastrophes which will accrue from certain lines of conduct. The happiness of my father and mother's married life was the direct outcome of the grief that broke my aunt Bethia's heart. I wish she could have known it. Had her nature been cast in another mould, the mould that can find compensation in pomps and vanities, in riches and worldly

condition, my grandmother would have complacently inculcated and acted upon her mercenary marriage-theories until the end. To prove their fallacy required the unanswerable argument of my aunt's sorrowful destiny.

I wish *Abt Vogler* had been written already, so that she could have read it before she died—

"THERE shall never be one lost good; what was, shall live as before.
The evil is null, is nought, is silence implying sound.
What was good shall be good, with, for evil so much good more;
On the earth the broken arcs, in the heaven a perfect round.

All we have willed, or hoped, or dreamed of good shall exist;
Not its semblance, but itself—no beauty, nor good, nor power,
Whose voice has gone forth, but each survives for the melodist,
When eternity affirms the conception of an hour.

The high that proved too high, the heroic for earth too hard,
The passion that left the ground to lose itself in the sky,
Are music sent up to God by the lover and the bard.
Enough that he heard it once; we shall hear it by and by."

A knock upon the door interrupted the transcribing of the final stanzas of *Abt Vogler*, and the knock was followed by the sound of my maid's voice without—"Please, m'm, Mrs. Goodall's kind love, and are you remembering to save your used postage-

stamps for her? and the messenger is waiting to take back your new grey cloak, as you promised Miss Maria the pattern; and Boiler says the Co-operative has not sent the beef, and what is she to send up for luncheon, and would please, m'm, mutton-chops do?"

Of such are the realities of life.

XXXVII.

THE garden is really a Complete Eden—to pilfer a title from the Herbalists. The uninitiated would never imagine that this parish of Chelsea, within sound of the wheels of Sloane Street, could contain a strip of ground that blossoms as the Rose. But so it is, thanks to the firm of Messrs. Veitch.

The making of the garden was certainly, in the performance, a laborious task. The garden soil had all to be carried through the house—not through the house only, but through the very kitchen. The persons for whom my name is "the thralls" looked at me with very melancholic and austere countenances when during the course of the winter I announced that a garden was about to be made of the Slough of Despond region hitherto known as the back-yard. All the earth, all the everything, had to be carried through the kitchen. All the rubbish

and mud originally there had to be carted out by way of the kitchen. It was a sad time, but presently the earthworks were finished, and waving boughs and tall branches came through the precincts sacred to cooking—a very forest, as though Birnam Wood were come again to Dunsinane. And then bulbs poured in, and seedling plants, till the labour was ended and the pleasure began.

Four slender Almond trees stand sentinels at the corners of the garden and there showed brave pink garlands awhile back; a double Cherry spangled the place with silver, and brown sparrows swung upon the blossom-wreathed boughs in a fashion that reminded me of the fascinating work of that Japanese genius, Watanabe Seitei. Irises too showed their purple pride, and gallant Tulips disclosed painted petals with as fine an air of dignity as any that their cousins in Arcady put on. The garden had a great success in the spring, and now I can, among other treasures, boast of a Vine and a Fig-tree in full leaf. The leaves of the Fig-tree no longer resemble a daw's claw. "The mortal time of the year," according to Hippocrates, when the leaves of the Fig-tree resemble a daw's claw, has given place to gentler days. The Vine hourly throws new tracing upon the old wall, and white Pinks and blue Lupines

are blossoming, and so are Pansies. Snapdragon and Canterbury bells also are in bud, and the Lilies, the orange and the white, have entered upon the same engaging stage.

I had some very pretty catkins brought to me early in the year, and one or two of these I sent to the firm, who are really magicians in gardening affairs, to match. The catkins were matched, and two Willows now adorn the Complete Eden. Their flowering time is over, but their cool sea-green foliage and highly polished stems are a delight to my eyes.

The poets, following one another as do sheep through a gap in a fence, have ever assigned to the Willow a melancholy and romantic significance. Drayton refers to the Willow after this wise—

> "In love the sad, forsaken wight,
> The Willowe garland weareth"—

and the pages of the Elizabethan writers, with Shakespeare to keep them in countenance, are powdered with allusions to the Willow as figuring in like mournful pageants. Even the common-sensible Dr. Johnson catches the doleful sentiment, and sets down the Willow in his dictionary as "a tree worn by forlorn lovers."

These verses treat of the Willows of Shakespeare—

A SONG OF WILLOW.

HER wreath Ophelia on a Willow hung,
Before she passed away;
A song of Willow Desdemona sung,
Ere down to die she lay.
A song of Willow heart-sick Barbara had,
And dying sung when he she loved proved mad.

Dido stood with a Willow in her hand
Upon the lone sea-shore;
That night Æneas left the Libyan strand,
Faithless, to come no more.
So, Ladies, has the Willow ever been
Emblem of grief to maid, and bride, and queen.

But in prose the Willow's attributes and such direful characteristics have no similitude. The voice of the multitude, finding expression in adage, shows Salix, the Willow, in a very different aspect. "The Willow will buy a horse before the Oak will pay for a saddle," and "Withie is weak, but he binds many woods," give the proverbial version of the matter.

Much of Willows is to be gleaned from the old books; their use long ago was manifold as their beauty is. Columella names the tree "a dowry for Vineyards," and Pliny records at length its value and service. "Ye shall have of these Osiers," he says, as translated by Dr. Philemon Holland, "some that

are very fine and passing slender, whereof are wrought pretty baskets and many other dainty devises, other also that are more tough and strong, good to make paniers, hampers, and a thousand other necessary implements for country houses, and to fit the husbandman. Being pilled they are the fairer and whiter, more smooth also and gentle in hand, whereby they are excellent good for the more delicate sort of such wicker ware, and better far than stubborn leather; but principally for leaning chairs, wherein a man or woman may gently take a nap sitting at ease, and repose most sweetly." "Cato," he goes on to relate, "among rural commodities esteemeth the Willowe in the third place, and preferreth the increase and benefit thereby before the gaine that groweth from olive-rows, corn-fields, and good meadows." As a binder in the Vine-yards, and as a Vine-prop, was the Willow cultivated in Italy, and, Pliny, after mentioning as good for bands Spanish Broom, Poplars, Elms, Birch, Reeds, leaves of Cane and cuttings of the Vine and Briars and Hazel wands, declares that "the Willowe hath a gift therein beyond all the rest." "The decoction of the leaves and bark boyled in wine is passing wholesome to foment the nerves withall," he further writes, and presently prescribes the heating the juice well with oil-of-Roses in the rind of a Pomegranate, as "excellent it is for

to be dropped into the ears." Lyte, in his translation of Dodoen's Herbal, gives high medicinal value to the Willow. "The leaves and rinds of Withie," he says, "boyled in wine, do appease the paines of the sinewes and restore again their strength if they be nourished with the fermentation or natural heate thereof." "The green boughs with the leaves may very well be brought into chambers and set about the beds of those that be sick of fevers, for they do mightily cool the heate of the air, which thing is a wonderful refreshing to the patient," another old writer tells. The juice of the Willow was also held to clear the sight, and a decoction was included among the remedies for ague.

"Withie," to quote once more from Lyte, "floureth at the beginning of the spring time. His flower or blossom is like a fine throm or thick-set velvet heaped up together about a little stemme, the which, when it openeth, is soft in handling, and like downe or cotton, and therefore the whole flower is called a chatton, kitekin, or catteken." As fuel, the wood of the Willow was formerly held in much esteem. "It emits little smoke, and is remarkably sweet," Mr. Evelyn says in his *Silva;* "it burns fine and clear to the last, and is therefore proper for Ladies' chambers and such people as are curious in procuring

the sweetest sorts of fire woods." "The wood," continues the author of *The Discourse of Forest Trees*, "being preserved dry will dure a very long time, but that which is found wholly putrefied and reduced to a loamy earth in the hollow trunks of superannuated trees is of all others the fittest to be mingled with fine mould for the raising our choisest flowers, such as Anemones, Ranunculuses, Auriculas and the like."

Goldfinches and some other wise birds have a liking for the down of the catkins as lining for their nests.

Mystic properties were ascribed to the Willow many centuries ago. Herodotus tells of the Scythian sorcerers making use in their divinations of Willow wands, and faith in the Willow's power in enchantment lasted long. The author of my Scripture Herbal declares Withy to the best of his belief to be under the dominion of the moon. "If I forget not," he writes, and Culpeper confirms the dictum, "the astrologers place it under the moon, who is cold and moist; but the leaves, flowers, juice, bark and catkins are reckoned cold and dry in the 2nd degree, and very astringent."

Willow bark will tan leather and dye yarn of a saffron or a primrose hue. The uses indeed of the

tree are numerous. The wood, being both light and tough, has served in the manufacture of much of our most useful merchandise since the time when our barbarian forbears put to sea in boats of woven Osiers, and British baskets were exported to Rome.

> "A barbarous basket, such as Britons frame,
> To Rome, the mistress of the world, I came;
> And Rome herself desired, when I was shown,
> To call the painted Briton's art her own."

"Adde et bascaudas"—"Bring in also the British baskets," says Juvenal.

Magical properties may now no longer be ascribed to "Withy and his kindes." We do not at the present take ship in vessels of such fragile construction; our defence may no more lie in shields of skin covering a framework of wicker wands. We dwell not in Willow cabins, nor are British baskets, perhaps, yet held famous in Rome. But Time has, peradventure, given to Salix, the Willow, far more than it has stolen. The wood still serves for many and varied purposes, and the harvest of the Salictum is by no means the least valuable that Mother Earth affords to her toiling children. But it is for medicinal qualities that the Willow has in these latter days won renown. From the bark of the tree of which it has been said "the industrious bees love it well,"

the drug salicin—the specific for that cruellest of maladies, rheumatic fever, with its attendant woes —is procured; and in salicin, too, Withy gives an antiseptic of much worth. Now, as long ago, the Willow indeed deserves the old praise that it won when Pliny wrote—"Nullius enim tutior est reditus, minorisve impendii, aut tempestatum securior."

And sufferers even *in extremis* need not lose heart. Though borne to the very marge of Styx their unguent they may find there. For the marge of Styx has yet another name, and that name is The Willowed Shores.

* * * * * *

The words of Sir Thomas Browne concerning the mob, as penned in the pages of the *Religio Medici*, are very agreeable reading to me. "If there be any among those common objects of hatred I do condemn and laugh at, it is that great enemy of reason, virtue, and religion, the multitude. That numerous piece of monstrosity which, taken asunder, seem men and the reasonable creatures of God, but confused together make but one great beast, and a monstrosity more prodigious than Hydra. It is no breach of charity to call these fools; it is the style all holy writers have afforded them, set down by Solomon in canonical Scripture, and a point of our faith to believe so.

Neither in the name of Multitude do I only include the base and minor sort of people. There is a rabble even amongst the Gentry; a sort of plebeian heads, whose fancy moves with the same wheel as those; men in the same level with mechanicks, though their fortunes do somewhat gild their infirmities, and their purses compound for their follies."

When I condemn the "vulgar public," I ease my conscience with the dictum, "It is no breach of charity to call these fools; it is the style all holy writers have afforded them."

Coriolanus too had the right way with the rabble. Well indeed the words that Shakespeare puts into his mouth sum up the present's exigencies—

> . . . "Where gentry, title, wisdom,
> Cannot conclude, but by the yea and no
> Of general ignorance,—it must omit
> Real necessities, and give way the while
> To unstable slightness: purpose so barred, it follows
> Nothing is done to purpose."

I really *hate* Demos, and I am greatly obliged to Solomon, Shakespeare, and Sir Thomas Browne for affording honourable shelter to my humble opinion.

XXXVIII.

MRS. GOODALL came to see me again this morning. "I wonder," I said to her, after a pause in the conversation—a pause, at least, as far as I was concerned—"if, as the pupils of our eyes contract in strong light, conveying to the brain only a given quantity, it is so also with things spiritual? Do you think," I went on, forgetting really to whom I spoke, "that our senses contract as do the pupils of our eyes, and absorb but a given quantity of what is around?"

Mrs. Goodall put on an air of aggrieved affront. "We should hope to grow in grace, not diminish," she replied reprovingly. "If, Bethia, you would go more regularly to church and make use of those privileges ordained for our spiritual comfort, you would not be troubled by such very distressing ideas."

"I did not mean anything wicked," I answered. The idea does not distress me—it consoles me rather.

I always feel as if there must be so much more than we now realise that there is. So much more hidden than our senses can convey. And I like to think that perhaps for all our faculties it is, during this life, as it is with the pupils of our eyes."

"It must be very bad for your eyes to sit reading in such a dim light as you do," Mrs. Goodall rejoined. "I dare say that you have weakened them so; though they look strong enough. And I am perfectly convinced that half of your fanciful notions about your sight as well as other things come from the dull, shut-up life you lead. Instead of alarming yourself with such ideas you should call in a sensible man, like Mr. Jones. He would know what to do. One of the girls had black spots before her eyes last week, and his common-sense treatment quite put her right again. 'A touch of indigestion, Mrs. Goodall,' he said, 'but with a bottle of this mixture, for which I am writing a prescription, and attention to diet for a day or two, Miss Maria will be quite herself again,' and so she was. I never saw Maria looking better in her life. Why don't you call in Mr. Jones?"

This was an old subject of attack.

"You prefer Sir Chiron because he humours you, Bethia," Mrs. Goodall continued. How tiresome she can be. "As I have said before I have no patience

with these fashionable doctors. If Sir Chiron was of any use you would have been well long ago. And you need not despise Mr. Jones. He has a very good family practice, and goes to all sorts of people besides. Only the very last time I saw him, he was in a great hurry, a very great hurry, and he told me he could not wait. He said the Duchess of Salisbury had sent for him, and he had not a moment to spare. He is very highly thought of indeed."

"I have no doubt of it," I said wearily. "Not of him will it ever be said, 'Of whom the world was not worthy.' He would interest me more if it ever could be. Are you taking Maria to Mrs. Mammon's ball?"

* * * * * *

Once, when I was ill, the pupils of my eyes did not contract properly in the light; and their failure in this function gave me a sickening overpowered sensation, as if my brain would faint. This it was that suggested to me the notion I propounded to Mrs. Goodall just now. It is hopeless to try to come to an understanding with her. Attempted communication is about as profitable and fruitful of result as it would be were we both blind, deaf, and dumb. Who counts upon her comprehension—

"Swims with fins of lead
And hews down oaks with rushes."

OF TIME'S FLIGHT.

TIME only follows suit by rapid flight
Through hours when hope springs high and hearts
are light;
Time only follows suit by lagging tread
When hope and happiness lie cold and dead:
Unto quick music bridal chariots go,
But mourning coach's pace is ever slow.

OUT OF THE GREEK.

PHANION, my love for thee is as a sword
To which my being doth a sheath afford.
Phanion, my life without thee is a shrine
Plundered and spoiled of all it held divine.

TO LETTY.

AND as, dear Letty, thou would'st learn
Why gold and silver show in turn,
Why silver spangles spring's domain,
While autumn's forests gold-dust rain,
Why orchards wear white wreaths in spring,
In autumn gold enamelling—

The reason I will now unfold :
Silver is speech, silence is gold.
And so with silver bloom spring tires
Shy Philomel and throstle's choirs,
And when the sweet songs all are sung,
The silent aisles with gold are hung :
Spring's silver I prefer I own,
But that is not the question.

XXXIX.

WERE I friendless or a foundling, the chances are that long ere this I should have found vent for my energies in novel-writing. As it is, the accomplishment of such a task would be fraught with danger.

Even short of the friendless, foundling environment, I might, may-be, have ventured into the lively region of fiction, were my friends and relations only of the opposite sex. But situated as I now am, handsomely provided by a liberal fate with a fund of female acquaintances and kith and kin, it would be more than my life and reputation are worth did I labour in the perilous fields, the harvest of which takes the form of three volumes bearing Messrs. Mudie's ticket and the author's name.

Were I to shift the period back to the times of the Babylonian captivity, or even to the early days of Christianity, going for scenic effect to the hanging

gardens of Babylon or the catacombs of Rome, it has sometimes occurred to me that I might escape opprobrium by the touch-and-go process. But even so perhaps the disguise would be stripped from my puppets, and in Nebuchadnezzar or Herod the cunning eyes of my kinswomen would detect a member of the family. No amount certainly of oriental or classical drapery would serve to veil the identity of my heroines from the piercing glances of Mrs. Goodall, and my relations of my own sex.

I have seen too plainly that which occurred in the case of other foolhardy story-tellers to pretend to ignorance of the nature of the treatment meted out to the quill-driver whose readers have "known her from a child." To my romance would immediately be ascribed two features, either or both of which a little—a very little—looking below the surface would reveal. The first, indiscreet self-revelation; the second, libellous portraiture drawn from life. When my poor cousin, Ferdinand's wife, took to pen-craft, and sent forth a volume for which we all condescendingly asked at the circulating libraries, the comments that went the round of the family were of the Julia-really-might-have-had-better-taste type, interleaved with queries worded in the form of "And how does *Ferdinand* like it?" Vast powers of memory, limit-

less indeed, were ascribed to Julia; of imagination she was totally deprived. Such scenes as truly were not those that go to make up the daily round of Mrs. Goodall's or Mrs. Macgaloshes' existence were held as direct transcripts from Julia's discreditable experience. "Julia," the family said, "never invented *that*"; whilst for traits either ludicrous or objectionable in her puppets she had gone, not to her fancy, but—with a shameful disregard of decency—to the idiosyncrasies of those who "really one might have thought safe from her shafts of ridicule." We were all terribly shocked and consequently delightfully self-satisfied.

I informed Julia at the time, I remember, that her rashness in dealing with the nineteenth century and with ordinary human beings, clad as we are ourselves, reached the foolhardy pitch. "You should, of course," I told her, "have confined at least your male *dramatis personæ* to the ranks of the ancient druids. Why did you not hem them in within the limits of Stonehenge—treating the ancient druids conventionally, of course, after the method of twenty-five years ago, before Mr. Hardy had given a questionable flavour of modernity to Stonehenge?" Julia replied that it was "all very well" for me to laugh, "but really it was a great shame." I am in agreement

with Julia, and as it would irritate Antony and my sister, if not myself, to hear the she-really-might-have-had-better-taste criticism, I shall leave well alone, and write no romance.

A while ago, Antony scribbled the fragment that I will to-morrow copy into my book. It discloses from another point of view the friendless foundling's advantages.

XL.

BEFORE RHADAMANTHUS.

(*A Fragment.*)

SCENE.—*The Lower World.*

Persons represented.—CHARON, RHADAMANTHUS, MERCURY, and sundry Shades.

RHADAMANTHUS. Whom have we here?

MERCURY. Two anonymous givers, my lord, and a devoted worker in the cause of humanity.

RHADAMANTHUS. Can't admit their claims to special places. They're too common. Three anonymous givers yesterday, five the day before, devoted workers in the cause of humanity four times a week. I tell you, Mercury, that they must be satisfied to associate with the rabble. They're too common now-a-days for out-of-the-way advantages.

MERCURY. They do come in pretty thickly, my lord, I admit; and Charon was saying as we came

across that there are no such discontented, dissa
passengers as your devoted workers in the ca
humanity. When two or three get together the
is too hot to hold them. All wanting to ex
each other's wounds and pour in oil and win
none of them willing to have their own se
They know the quality of the oil and wine,
pose, and would rather give than receive it.
are so conceited, too, priding themselves on
works done without the hope of future reward.
they are quite enchanted if any one falls a
thieves, for the sake of playing the part of the
Samaritan.

CHARON. Ay, it's true enough; and the w
are worse than the men, Rhadamanthus. A
who came over but yesterday said—and she
the truth plainly—"I am glad enough to e
Charon. I have been ill a long time, and they
all make appointments to mourn over my healt
me, and said I must be in a very odd state if
not willing to have my injuries handled freely."

RHADAMANTHUS. Yes, I have heard the
complaint before. To quote Mr. Alexander
it's the old story—"Fools rush in where ange
to tread." No shade, then, to-day, qualified fo
of the best places?

MERCURY. Oh, I don't say that. Besides the two anonymous givers and the devoted worker in the cause of humanity, we've brought a very different character. One who has done more to promote the happiness of her fellow-creatures than a dozen others put together.

RHADAMANTHUS. Her qualifications?

MERCURY. Went in the guise of a leper, and let all her friends say it was a shocking case: they had always suspected something of the kind, and, out of charity, they would immediately visit her.

RHADAMANTHUS (*to the Shade*). Is this so?

THE SHADE (*modestly*). It is, my lord.

MERCURY. And she meekly accepted the prescriptions of every unqualified amateur medical practitioner. She swallowed remedies that had cured the diseases of all her friends' and relations' ancestors.

RHADAMANTHUS (*to the Shade*). Is this so?

THE SHADE (*modestly*). It is, my lord.

MERCURY. She went five sea-voyages, and to Brighton for a thorough change every fortnight. She was massaged, braced, rest-cured, and roused alternately at the bidding of every one with whom she had a bowing acquaintance.

RHADAMANTHUS (*to the Shade*). Is this so?

THE SHADE (*modestly*). It is so, my lord.

MERCURY. And it killed her, my lord.

RHADAMANTHUS (*to the Shade*). Is this so?

THE SHADE. The doctors said, sir, that I should have lived far longer had I been friendless and a foundling.

RHADAMANTHUS. She has substantiated her claim. Make ready for her the one remaining place of honour left for the occupation of the Shades of those who have lived on earth during this most philanthropic nineteenth century.

Of Bethia Hardacre

XLI.

I AM quite ready to admit that I do not put myself to the trouble of following punctiliously the common usage of the time in the matter of spelling; but this irregularity carries me back into such excellent company that I should look upon an attempt to perfect myself in so nonsensical an accompaniment of the noble art of letters not only as foolish but as suicidal.

To spell in servile obedience to the etiquette laid down by a contemporary dictionary is a craze too new-fangled, an adjunct of the scholar's equipment too noisomely modern in character, to commend itself to a mind tuned, as is my own, to the rhythm of the past. I would indeed as readily write to a "lady's newspaper" for enlightenment in questions of social procedure as I would turn to the dictionary for the sake of extending my knowledge in the region

of that arch-impostor Custom's dictates. Serenely will I continue to spell, and also to punctuate, just as the fancy and convenience of the moment prompt; so running no risk of the degradation that would overtake me could the disgraceful epithet "Up to date" be, by any possibility, applied to my pen-craft. Proud am I in fact to remain (were it not for the existence of a few gutter children) a solitary relic, in this commonplace nineteenth century, of a less machinery-ridden past. And did I take it into my head to write the adjective proud "prowde," so much the better. For did not that sweet poet and melodious singer, Edmund Spenser, do likewise? And surely all who are nice in such matters will prefer his "goteheard prowde" to the modern pen-man's unadorned presentment of the words.

Never was there so much talk as there is at present of self-development, and never was there a time when the seeker might so vainly seek far and wide for individuality and originality as now. From momentous affairs to those merely (or as the old writers would have written, meerly) petty, the turned-out-by-the gross process is on every side apparent.

In the matter of personal attire, even, we must all go clad as much alike as the sheep of a flock; as though to the dignity of age or the buoyancy of

youth one and the same livery were becoming. Mistress and maid, grand-dam and grandchild, don garments of a like form and fashion, till the mode (followed with a catholicism that sickens its followers apace) is replaced impatiently by another that as speedily shares the fate of that which preceded it. I, too, forsooth, am expected to order the very consonants and vowels of my choice till, letter by letter, they follow exactly the pattern of those compounding the vernacular of every other tiresome woman in the street. The thing is absurd.

With what far greater skill did they manage this long ago. The giants of the Elizabethan age allowed their exuberance of imagination full play even in the writing of each other's proper names. When his "learned sock" was on, the poet's friends were guilty of no stereotyped and levelling uniformity in the spelling of even rare Ben Jonson's name. So late again as Mr. Evelyn's day his admirers gave or denied to his name the "y" as they thought well. Then, and before then, was it recognised that ingenuity and fancy thrive best when kept within no narrow bounds. Waywardness and grace are, in truth, so nearly allied that, deny free play to the first, and the second is pretty well unattainable. Formality is ever the deadliest foe of that subtle witchery to which we give the

name of "grace," and there is that subtle witchery in the old and (according to the lexicons) obsolete spelling, though the nature of the charm in this particular is as intangible and hard to define as that of personal charm ever is. Would even the School Board Inspectors deny that Spenser's

"And farewel, mery hart,"

would lose in fragrance if forced to conform to the orthography of the current Cocker? I admit that could I, searching through the slums of the city, come across a child who wrote dear heart "deare hart," I would think there was hope for her and adopt her as my own. Indeed, a severe pruning of the lettering is often on a par with the works of a Vandal gardener's shears among the Vines and frail clustering Roses with which nature embodies the spirit of that delicate beauty, the incarnation of which we also see in a Greek frieze. Look at this—one of the sweetest couplets that the sixteenth or any century produced: a paring of the orthography here would be a deed not very far removed from the clipping away of the Grape Vine's fragile tendrils and the Rose-Briar's drooping buds—

"For though the daye be never so long
At length the belle ringeth to evensong."

But we trouble ourselves little now-a-days with

beauty like to that of a Greek frieze. We relegate old Hawes' lines to the nursery, and contentedly leave unstruck chords in which such melody lies locked as these notes (also Hawes') breathe—

"After the daye there cometh the darke nighte."

For the state of things that I deplore I partly lay the blame upon the abominable spirit of interference with private property and the vile tyranny of democracy now abroad. The vulgar many are ever for fettering the select few with the irons in which they best go themselves, and would have persons of lively and prolific fancy spell with a persistent and appalling monotony unknown, till Demos reigned, save in the *idée fixe* of the monomaniac.

According to the modern formula, the herbalists could not spell but display a most engaging freedom and fertility of resource, compared to the horrid evidences of nineteenth century slavery with which we are confronted in every book that the libraries label and send out. Their flowers are flowres, or flours; their soil, soyle or soyl; and such divergences from the usual as now occasionally refresh the jaded School Board Inspector, by provoking a laugh, are to be met with in every second line of original editions of works dated before the present period of conventional serfdom.

An instance of the truth of this statement presents itself to me upon the first page of the book that I have just opened in quest of like proofs. Browne in his *Britannia's Pastorals* gives Plumb tree for Plum. This variance from the expected would be too much for the School Board Inspector's gravity. Let us look in to-day's lexicon. "Plumb—a mass of lead or other material hung on a string"; and the image conjured up of this "mass of lead or other material hung on a string" tree would, in the eyes of the School Board Inspector, set a fool's cap on the head of the writer of *Britannia's Pastorals.*

And if in the golden age of literature courtly poets and playwrights permitted not the iron or the orthographical code to enter into their souls, how much more impatient of the shackles of vulgar usage were the ladies whose white fingers deigned to hold a pen? Her Grace of Newcastle's or the matchless Orinda's spelling would now be held disgraceful in an infant quite newly caught up by the School Board, and I will ask the purists if they take

"Sidney's sister, Pembroke's mother"

to have spelt in accordance with the dictionary's canons? No, indeed, so much in common have I with

"Sidney's sister, Pembroke's mother,"

that we both, probably, write occasionally of the dictionary's *cannons*.

And there is yet another point of view, favourable to my verdict, from which to regard the matter. The very spelling that now arrogantly flaunts its orthodoxy is too often but the maimed and distorted rendering of the original lettering. Experts tell of a ruthless casting out, insertion and interchange of consonants and vowels continued through the ages; of a replacing, transposing, doubling and omitting process persisted in year by year, decade by decade. As I have written elsewhere, disfigured and debased, impoverished and debilitated now, alas, is the mother-tongue. He therefore who prides himself upon punctilious conformity to the prevailing system prides himself upon his close acquaintance with the ordinances of but a sorry pigeon-English after all.

XLII.

ANTONY brought me a letter of some length just now that he had received from Clara St. Quentin. It ran this wise—

"DEAR MR. HARDACRE,

"It is almost too much to ask, but *could* you spare any of your wonderful sketches—the worst would be quite good enough—for the Additional Curates sale? (We are having a stall, you know, in July, and I am *so* anxious to make it something a little out of the common and artistic.) Your sketches would be *too, too charming*, and I should be *so* grateful for them. I do not mean to exhibit any of the common decorative art-painting on china, &c., such as is usually seen at bazaars, in which there is so little true sense of colour and form; but your work is *so* different —so exquisitely thoughtful and refined, that I am really longing to raise the tone of our little exhibition by the help of a few of those delicate poems on canvas (that is how I always *think* of them, and so must everybody of taste) of which you are the

composer. I am no real judge, of course, only a passionate lover of real talent; but it did strike me that the pictures you showed me when last I called upon your sister were *perfect* of their kind. I am indeed actually *haunted* by the remembrance of that fascinating little gem entitled, 'In the shade of Ben——'" (the word that followed in Clara's MS., though composed of about twenty-four letters, was undecipherable). "Perhaps my devotion to dear romantic Scotland tended to enchant me particularly with that stimulating souvenir of fondly recollected scenes. Indeed they quite laugh at me at home for my infatuated affection for Scotland, and perhaps I do carry my adoration to a pitch beyond the comprehension of *ordinary* natures. I have always, however, received most peculiar kindness from the Scotch, and that of course helps to strengthen my natural predilections for the land of so chivalrous a race. *Sans peur et sans reproche* seems to me an expression that *must* have been made for the Highlanders. I really idolize the Celtic temperament. Hoping you will forgive me for troubling you in this way,

"Yours most sincerely,

"CLARA ST. QUENTIN.

"P.S.—I saw Professor Hardacre in Piccadilly yesterday on the opposite side of the street, but he did not see me, though I bowed repeatedly. He was wrapped in deep reflection evidently. How intensely interesting the moods of men of intellect are! I would

not break into the absorption of profound thought for the world. I have far too much reverence for genius."

"Shall you send her any drawings, Antony?" I inquired. I am never perfectly sure of my ground when Clara's verdict upon dear simple-minded Antony's work is the subject under discussion.

"I think that perhaps I shall—'some of the worst,'" Antony answered, smiling. "It would be good-natured. Do you not think so, Bethia?"

"You refused any for the same purpose, only yesterday, to that excellent woman, Mrs. Goodall, Antony," I said.

"Oh, Mrs. Goodall," Antony's voice took a tone as nearly akin to gentle contempt as is compatible with his most amiable disposition. "Mrs. Goodall does not know a drawing from a bale of drugget."

Now, in my own mind, I do not feel assured that, in the matter of Mrs. Goodall's and Clara St. Quentin's standard of taste and real appreciation of art, we have not the condition of affairs known as "six of one and half-a-dozen of the other." But then, Antony not being sufficiently well endowed with this world's goods to be encouraged as a possible son-in law, Mrs. Goodall has no time to waste in laudations of his brush-craft; whilst Clara regards every field of enter-

prize in which the members of the opposite sex play a part as her district, wherein rapturous praise is to be doled out after the orthodox method of distributing soup-tickets.

Antony sent a polite note in answer to Clara's letter, acceding to her request. Within two hours of its reception, his reply brought Clara in person to the house to offer in return profuse thanks and lavish expressions of gratitude.

"I shall worry no more about the Additional Curates," she said; "you have quite set my mind at rest, Mr. Hardacre, about their sale. Thanks to your excessive generosity, as I told Mamma when I read your note, my anxiety is at an end. And Mamma is as pleased as I am. 'Really, Clara,' she had been saying to me, 'you will torment yourself to death over this bazaar; you are looking positively hunted.' I *had* been quite silly about it, I confess. (I can't help taking things to heart, and the cause seemed so good.) Now I shall be perfectly certain that our stall, owing to your kindness, will be an immense success. I can never repay you, I fear."

I had noticed when Clara entered that she was the bearer of a packet carefully swathed in tissue paper. When she had for the time being said the last word

on Antony's marvellous liberality and exquisite taste, she untied the ribands bound about the parcel and drew forth a large vellum-bound volume, showing red-edged leaves, and—in gold lettering upon the cover—the word OPINIONS.

"This," said Clara, freeing the book from its numerous wrappings, "is a present I received this morning from a very dear friend, one of those charmingly clever people whose minds afford me so much delight. It is a book for opinions, you see, and everybody interesting and literary must write an opinion in it. Professor Hardacre, you will write down one of your intellectual ideas, won't you? Some opinion that you really hold, you know, and is really characteristic."

My uncle, the Professor of all Philosophies, had come to my room ignorant of Clara's presence. He showed no disposition to take the proffered volume from Clara's extended hand, on the fingers of which as usual a surprising number of little rings glittered.

"Oh, but indeed you must. You would never refuse me," she cried, in answer to his excuses and dry declarations of disinclination. "A quotation would be sufficient so long as it really expresses your own conclusions. As I said just before starting to Mamma, 'After my own entry I shall quite insist upon

Professor Hardacre's writing something.' I want the standard to be really very high."

The Opinion Book so far recorded but one opinion. The first page showed blank but for the following inscription—

> "Lives of great men all remind us
> We can make our lives sublime."
> CLARA ST. QUENTIN, May 25th, 1894.

My uncle regarded the lines for a second, a certain lively flash in his eyes the while—a gleam in which I, who know him, recognised the outward sign of suppressed amusement. Then as Clara's importunities did not cease, he took up a pen, and with no relaxation of his gravity wrote below the couplet of her choice—

> "The best-laid schemes o' mice and men
> Gang aft a-gley."

"I fear that Professor Hardacre has had a great deal of trouble in his life," Clara said to me when presently my uncle had secluded himself elsewhere. "I thought it so touching that he should write what he did in my book. I did not like publicly to express my feelings, but I hope he knows me well enough to feel sure of my sympathy without the aid of words. Had we been alone I very likely might have broached the subject. I still may."

Clara opened her book once more, and sat gazing with an expression of deep interest and profound sadness upon the words my uncle had penned.

"Professor Hardacre is quite a Celt," she, after a moment's silence, exclaimed. "That intense melancholy underlying a chivalrous and high-bred courtesy is to me one of the most fascinating attributes of the race."

Poor Clara. Of my uncle she could say in the words of Marcius: "He is a lion I am proud to hunt."

Of Bethia Hardacre

XLIII.

WILL Time in the future cast discredit as ruthlessly upon the opinions and verdicts of our present-day high authorities as it has upon the opinions and verdicts of those whose dicta were unquestioningly received in the past? The question presented itself to me when this evening I came across the following statement in a curious little seventeenth century volume, a Scripture Herbal, by one William Westmacott—

"It is most probable (after all my inquisitions) that the Ark was built of Cedar wood; for so Sir Walter Raleigh and many of our modern commentators opine."

For my own part, I feel sure that whatever the conclusions of another decade may be, they will not be those of this. The judicial rôle of one generation seems to be the revoking of the verdicts of that which preceded it. When I have ventured to doubt the omniscience of some modern theory of science or

ethics, I am loftily told by the propagandists that the thing is accepted, *i.e.* proven. Accepted by whom? I cantankerously feel disposed to inquire. Accepted by all time? or by just the current human throng that, soon to be replaced, for this particular moment walk the earth? I am sufficiently blockheaded to refuse credence to Darwinism—to the evolution of species cult. Surely since the earliest days of the Egyptian dynasties, I fatuously ask, some slight rise in mortal mind or matter might be looked for, if the evolving process is for ever the rule of life. My query is impatiently swept aside. Darwinism is accepted, I am informed. My argument, doubtless, is childish and ridiculous, but that the belief which I do not share is accepted by the world's present inhabitants is no proof, I hold, of its infallibility. What have not the ages accepted? The creeds of the sceptic are for ever changing. The creeds of the devout seem alone able to resist the fickle variableness of Time.

I sympathise with the author of the Scripture Herbal in pinning his faith to Sir Walter Raleigh, though read to-day gentle amusement is it that his words provoke and not the conviction which he took them to carry.

The fiery spirit that dared speak truth through prison bars was of the essence of which leaders of

men are made. For not very many lines in the language have I a much greater liking than for Sir Walter Raleigh's fearless poem 'The Lie'—

THE LIE.

"Go, soul, the body's guest
Upon a thankless arrant:
Fear not to touch the best;
The truth shall be thy warrant:
Go, since I needs must die,
And give the world the lie.

Say to the Court it glows
And shines like rotten wood;
Say to the Church it shows
What's good and doth no good:
If Court and Church reply,
Then give them both the lie.

Tell potentates they live
Acting by others' action;
Not loved unless they give,
Not strong but by a faction:
If potentates reply,
Give potentates the lie.

Tell men of high condition
That rule affairs of state,
Their purpose is ambition,
Their practice only hate:
And if they once reply,
Then give them all the lie.

* * * * *

Tell Age it daily wasteth;
Tell Honour how it alters;

Tell Beauty how she blasteth ;
  Tell Favour how it falters :
And as they shall reply,
Give every one the lie.
* * * * *
Tell Physic of her boldness ;
  Tell Skill it is pretention ;
Tell Charity of coldness ;
  Tell Law it is contention :
And as they do reply,
So give them still the lie.

Tell Fortune of her blindness ;
  Tell Nature of decay ;
Tell Friendship of unkindness ;
  Tell Justice of delay :
And if they will reply,
Then give them all the lie.

Tell Arts they have no soundness,
  But vary by esteeming ;
Tell Schools they want profoundness
  And stand too much on seeming :
If Art and Schools reply,
Give art and schools the lie.

Tell *Faith it's fled the city ;*
  Tell *how the country erreth ;*
Tell *Manhood shakes off pity ;*
  Tell Virtue least preferreth :
And if they do reply,
Spare not to give the lie.

So when thou hast, as I
  Commanded thee, done blabbing,
Although to give the lie
  Deserves no less than stabbing,
Yet stab at thee who will,
No stab the soul can kill."

XLIV.

THE sound of the hall-door bell resounded through the house this afternoon, and shortly afterwards the servant brought tidings of the coming of a man with a soup-tureen.

"A man with a soup-tureen" was to me delightfully suggestive of the title of a Dutch picture, and I half expected an "old master" to emerge from a packing-case in which rumour said the soup-tureen lay encased. But it was no "old master" that I drew forth from the swathes of hay and paper. The wrappings removed, I saw myself the fortunate possessor of an old Worcester china soup-tureen, the man proving a necessary appendage only as far as the hall-door.

The soup-tureen is a very engaging object—stately in form, admirably blazoned with a richness of colouring that, for all its gorgeousness, is perfectly harmonious. The new-comer certainly is a most

welcome inmate of the room, and I appreciate its presence as thoroughly as the sender could wish. The lid off, an excellent receptacle for flowers results; and flowers indeed have the trick of donning a particularly pretty air when set in bowls or jars of old Indian, Chinese, or English ware. The Parrot-Tulips with which I have filled my soup-tureen look prettier therein than even they showed in the big glass gourd from which I took them. Nor do the flowers pale the colour of the painted china. The reds and the blues, the gold and the green of the Worcester crockery, whilst in no whit garish, retain the effect of brilliancy notwithstanding the proximity of blossoms fresh from the garden's loom and dyed with spring's rainbow-dyes. It is very clever of the soup-tureen to accomplish this and yet be neither gaudy nor "crude," as would surely be scroll-work in blue and red and green and gold thrown upon a white ground by a craftsman of to-day.

What ails us now that we can no longer put colour together as it was interwoven once upon a time? Not only in the utilitarian West but in the dreamy East the power seems to have faded, or to be fading fast. In the case of pictures and of fabrics, wounded vanity in the nineteenth century can take to itself comfort in the thought that the achievements of the

present have received as yet no aid from the master craftsman Time. But from the contemplation of old china no such balm is to be derived. Time may mellow the tints of the pictures' pigments and the fabrics' silk, but Time's service to old china can be but the cracking of it. The artists of to-day must be content with the modern standard of merit, and not invite comparison with that of the giants of the past. The work may be declared good, but set it side by side with that come down to us from long ago, and the onlooker will experience a sensation akin to that with which Amanda would meet a suggestion to eke out the old flouncing of her wedding-gown with a yard of sham lace; or that with which I myself should contemplate the intermingling of false flowers with the Violets and Snowdrops of the spring.

Yes, grace and the air of quality both seem to have faded from art. Perhaps gas was their slayer. Modern brush-work may have many super-excellent attributes, but the portraits that the studios send forth require the help of the catalogue to noise abroad the fact that the painters' models be gentlefolk. Could we attire one of Sir Joshua's or Romney's or Lawrence's sitters in a gipsy's or peasant's garb, Madam would be but masquerading in homespun, and going barefoot for a fine-lady's whim; but either

upon the walls of Burlington House, or amid the crowds that gaze up at what the walls disclose, rare indeed is it to make discovery of a personality that barefooted and in rags or fustian would carry the air of a disguised fairy-story princess.

* * * * * *

I feel rather an ungrateful wretch for having written so slightingly as I did a few days ago about the beauties of Nature, expressing the while my belief that Nature's lovers are wanting in loyalty as a rule. Last night I dreamt that the great god Pan (announced conventionally by the servant) came into the room, and the aggrieved aspect of the god and the words which he addressed to me, "Et tu, Brute?" have haunted me ever since. So the next letter that I write, and that never will be sent, will be a letter to Pan; and it will be an apology and also a defence—

An Apology to Pan.

"Pan, I regret your disapproval much. I, as your speech last night hinted, am indeed the last person to turn traitor, but my words were true. In your own case, Pan, surely your love for the things of Nature is influenced by their association with what I can scarcely call Human Nature, but will term supernatural life and affairs generally of the heart? Think of Syrinx, Pan. It was as a nymph not as a Reed that

you were enamoured of her; and can you pretend that the Reed would be to you what it is but for Syrinx herself? Consider too, your acknowledged preference for Fig-trees. But for your affection for Pithys would a Fig-tree be by you beloved above all other trees? You play bravely the part of consoler and compensator up to a certain point. Many a one turns to you from the world and ways of men when all else fails. The things of Nature soothe, aid, strengthen; and through all the years, Pan, you have not lost your cunning. The unguent of the old days keeps intact its virtue still; and if art stales with the course of time, Nature for ever retains the freshness and buoyancy of the world's youth. None prettier ever blew than the Pansies this year is sending forth—no sweeter Violets yet blossomed than the Violets this spring unfolded. The Heather you have in store will prove no spent impression, but a vivid representation of the pristine glory of the moor. In the songs of your birds, the ripples of your burns, the music of your rivers, we, in this year of grace, are offered no ghostly echo of what is gone. Be satisfied, Pan. We are not ungrateful really, and recollect that it is our misfortune, not our fault, that you can only be second best."

I never forget the words of an old boatman, in whose boat I spent many an hour when in the Highlands once. He was telling me one evening of how he had left his native place for a while, and had gone to try

his luck in the gold-fields, and I asked of him if he had found many changes on his return.

"Yes," he replied, "it was many changes I found when I returned. The hills were there, but not the people, and"—with that note of the pathetic which is never very long wholly absent from the Celt—"the people are better than the hills."

"Yes," I repeated. "The people are much better than the hills." I was tired that evening ("in want of rousing and of Mr. Jones' common-sense treatment," Mrs. Goodall would have declared, perhaps rightly). That towards which to keep my thoughts from straying is my constant endeavour, got, without warning, quick and perfect mastery of my mind. For a few minutes the Heather-clad hills and the silver loch were blurred, and there was a mist begot of tears before my eyes.

"Miss Hardacre is not very strong," the old boatman said. He was a very kind old man, and used to assure me that I showed a wonderful facility for learning the Gaelic. His image it is that I always conjure up when I think of Charon. Did they tell me I was dying, I should, I think, look to find myself in another instant passing over such silvery waters bordered by Heather-clad hills, and, for the ferryman, that gentle-hearted old man.

Of Bethia Hardacre

XLV.

I DO not desire a "thorough change." With Seneca, I believe that change of place does no good without change of mind. I am frequently thankful to Seneca for having said this. Opinions which we have Seneca's authority for holding cannot be deemed wholly silly and ridiculous by those who are not in agreement with us.

"Change of places does no good without change of mind," says Seneca. "This is it that sends us upon rambling voyages. The town pleases us to-day, the country to-morrow; the splendour of the court at one time, the horrors of a wilderness at another. But all this while we carry our plague about us; for it is not the place we are weary of, but ourselves. . . . It must be the change of mind, not of climate, that will remove the heaviness of the heart. Our vices go along with us, and we carry in ourselves

the causes of our disquiets. There is a great weight lies upon us, and the bare shaking of it makes it the more uneasy. Changing of countries, in this case, is not travelling, but wandering." Certainly I agree with Seneca: "It is not the place we are weary of, but ourselves," and occasionally of our neighbours. If I am wearied with myself—with myself and what is about me—I think of that which takes me far away from the ingredients of existence here, and which, by dint of contrast, seems to gain in peace and quietude. I do not notice for the time the ceaseless sound of wheels, and all the din with which the hurrying, thronging multitude passes on its way.

When I would have a "thorough change," I think of the hills—of the place I call the Dream Place oftenest, perhaps, and often of a glen from where I saw a combat of eagles once.

The Dream Place is a solitude, and stands high among the hills. There is a little church there. It is bare, and quite undecked. Whitewash without, deal and whitewash within. No stained glass windows, no high altar, no candles burning. But they are not missed. There can be no better place for saying the petition that it may be remembered we are but dust than the church of the Dream Place is.

Of Bethia Hardacre

For very far round the Dream Place a flood of purple Heather dyes the moor. "The wine-dark sea" of Heather is the epithet that vision always suggests to me. And the silver of moorland streams reflects the purple of Heather too. With just here and there the shadow of sombre Pines, and the sunlight of flowers of golden hue, all is purple and silver at the Dream Place—the very air stained by the Heather's ascending glow. And through the purple radiance the swallows, as bolts of silver, flash to and fro. If the swallows are still sacred to Venus, it is surely to Venus Urania—"pale, dreamy, spiritual"—that the swallows of the Dream Place belong.

And the Dream Place is fragrant with very pleasant perfumes. The aromatic odours of the moor and of the Pine grove, and the homelier scent of peat-smoke, perfume the Dream Place air. And the sounds of the Dream Place are very pleasant sounds. Where grey rocks, near the river's edge, pierce earth's sward, wild Thyme blows, and bees gather honey there. And the sound of the humming of bees mingles with the sound of the swift-flowing river, and with the sound of the wind searching the dusky recesses of the dark Pine grove. And these two last sounds—the sound of the river and the sound of the wind—are borne up and up through the crystal aromatic air to

the summit among the hills where the church of the Dream Place stands. There is yet another sound that sometimes breaks the stillness of the Dream Place; a sound of a different kind; a sudden clash. It is the clashing of the horns of the mountain sheep meeting in hot-tempered fray. But the passionate humours seem speedily appeased. Belligerent attitudes are quickly exchanged for either reclining postures of languid and restful unconcern, or gambols the more fantastic for the reveller's long horns and trailing fleece. Pan himself might not disdain to shepherd so fanciful and fine a flock.

"Would that my father had taught me the craft of a keeper of sheep;
For so in the shade of the Elm-tree, or under the rocks on the steep,
Piping on Reeds, I had sat and lulled my sorrow to sleep."

Pan himself seems very near the Dream Place, and sometimes it is hard to say if the poems of the Greek Anthology or the verses of the Psalms of David suit it best.

To think of the Dream Place takes me very far away from the sights and sounds of a London street, from Mrs. Goodall's card-case, and from Clara St. Quentin's pseudo-raptures over studio ware.

Antony, who always says I am a pagan, and not

wholly human but a Hamadryad, or something peculiar of that nature, would find proof of his assertion did he know the notions that occur to me in connection with the Dream Place. But I do not tell them to him. I remember once hearing there a sudden rushing sound that neared the flower-meadow where I loitered. The approach of Dis's wagon was what the bruit suggested to my mind. Had I straightway seen the enacting of the rape of Proserpine the vision would have seemed to me in keeping with my surroundings, and no astounding pageant thrust into the humdrum context of a prosaic life. For, surely, in just such a flower-meadow did the daughter of Jupiter and Ceres pull the blossoms that, "frighted," she let fall when surprised and borne away to reign as queen in Hades.

Yes, to think of the Dream Place is a "thorough change," it is so peaceful and still; and when first I named it the Dream Place I did not know how well the name fitted the solitude that stands high among the hills, and of which the thought brings a sense of repose. I did not know that the Greeks, who were always right, held that healing came in dreams.

Some one said to me once that it was saddening to think of all the erring faiths in the past—of all the desire for good and for truth frustrated. I did not

agree. All striving after good and truth must come from the source of good and truth: all creeds that serve to ennoble mankind must be rooted in righteousness. It is not from the standpoint of pity that I regard a race who at Epidaurus, for inscription over the entrance to the sanctuary of Æsculapius, chose the legend—

"None but the pure shall enter here."

XLVI.

I HAVE just received the following letter from Mrs. Goodall—

"MY DEAR BETHIA,

"You will, I trust, rejoice with us in Maria's happiness. She accepted Sir Louis Ballister this afternoon. We have every reason to be satisfied. The Ballisters are very well connected, and Sir Louis, though not rich, has expectations, Mr. Goodall understands, from an uncle. Maria is young certainly, and I should have preferred it could she have waited for a few years before undertaking the grave responsibilities of a married woman; but such matters as this are in higher hands than ours, and there I can leave it, and sincerely believe that all is ordered for the best. I could not have looked to keep Maria very long at home. She has received a great deal of admiration. It is strange how little the distressingly fast girls and elderly young ladies, such as poor Miss St. Quentin, realise that what a sensible man wishes

for in a wife is a good, simple, well-brought-up, modest girl, such as I can thankfully say mine are. Maria is so happy that it is a pleasure to see her. Is Madame Florine very expensive—expensive, that is, for Bond Street? as if not, the dear child has a fancy for having the bridesmaids' dresses from her. She hopes you will give her the help of your good taste in the matter of her trousseau. Maria is very fond of you, and sends her love, and hopes you will write. She is confident of your sympathy, she tells me to say."

I do not pretend that the intelligence Mrs. Goodall's letter conveys affords me any satisfaction. Such marriages as this forthcoming marriage of Maria's are just those that go to make half the distress and half the wrong-doing of which Mrs. Goodall has spoken to me, times without number, in horror-stricken accents. Lowering her voice the while, in consideration of Maria's presence, with whispered pæans to Heaven that she is not as those sinners, has Maria's mother over and over again denounced the wickedness of culprits whose conduct was the outcome of precisely the condition that she now welcomes on behalf of her child. Did I acquaint her with the fact that in my thoughts she at present figures as the creator of a possibly "questionable" situation, the opinion would be too removed from her own conception of her part

to permit the notion house-room in her mind. That she, Mrs. Goodall, should play any but the rôle of the righteous—the righteous whose righteousness is strongly tinctured with commonsense—is a conclusion beyond the power of her intellect to recognise. My cousin Julia, who really detests Mrs. Goodall, said once that if at the Day of Judgment the verdict pronounced on Mrs. Goodall was adverse, it would take eternity and longer to convince her that she had heard aright.

Three months ago Maria confided to me her griefs, speaking after the broken-hearted fashion of some one other than the man she is content now to marry. I knew very well at the time that her heart was very far from breaking—that, in fact, her heart was no factor in the affair at all. Maria has all the sentimentality of a round-faced school-girl who regards her plumpness as a disaster, and longs, whilst retaining an insatiable appetite for tea-cakes, that her too solid flesh would melt on a diet of scones. Maria sat and carefully coddled her woes, cultivating every sigh with a tear, every tear with a sigh. It amused and excited her to confess to me her grief, and if, when she flung her arms round my neck and said how sweet of me it was to give her so much help, I felt as if I were the recipient of thanks for

that which I had neither given nor considered it necessary to give, I consoled myself for the deficit with the reflection that as those perilous luxuries, confessors, go, I was a safe one. In regard to my treatment I could, I thought, say for once with Mr. Jones, "Mine is the common-sense view of the case."

From the wedding in question I do not suppose that either grief or what the world terms wrong-doing will result. Maria is thoroughly commonplace and blunt, and has that happy capacity, to which I refer elsewhere, for going out in search of one object and coming home quite satisfied with another. If her husband is tolerably kind to her, as the chances are that he will be—for his heart, from what I have heard, leaves less to be desired than does his head—likely enough she will be perfectly well satisfied, and eagerly desirous that her sister should marry after the same mode. Mrs. Goodall also, I have no doubt, has no fear whatever in respect to Maria's future. Her standard of requirements in candidates for the holy estate of matrimony is inextricably confused with her convenient and soothing faith in Providence. She sees a "higher hand" where I see a low ideal. Nor in this is Mrs. Goodall's frame of mind amazing. Her own marriage was just such another as Maria's

will be, and she has never repented it. She would indeed look upon the repenting of it as a very decided decline towards immorality. With a like nature, Maria's chances of contentment are tolerably secure—tolerably, but not certainly. Who can foresee what the years will develop in any human creature? Maria may yet turn round to accuse her mother of being the author of her ills. "The old order changeth;" and not only do physical distempers seem capable of taking to themselves the nature of epidemics—moral and mental sufferings show, to a certain extent, a like capacity, I think.

And apart from the wrong (forswearing does not, I suppose, cease to be wrong when the perjury is committed "before God and in the face of this congregation") and apart from the possible woe that poor Maria is risking, I think of what possible weal she is indeed putting beyond her reach, and her mother, who should know better than herself, is denying to her. How beautiful are the words of Odysseus in his prayer for Nausicaa—"And may the gods grant thee all thy heart's desire: a husband and a home and a mind at one with his may they give: a good gift, for there is nothing mightier and nobler than when man and wife are of one heart and mind in a house, a grief to their foes, and to their friends great

joy; but their own hearts know it best." That which the hearts of those know who marry without love and without mutual understanding is mostly no subject of grief to their foes or great joy to their friends.

Mrs. Goodall reads the Bible. When she reads what St. Paul says, "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands as unto the Lord, for the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the Church," does she look to the working of a miracle for the carrying out of this injunction? Is there jugglery in words pronounced by priest, bishop, or even archbishop, and in the order of matrimony have we an incantation of the nature of a love-philtre by which indifference, contempt, and repugnance even, are transformed to love, reverence and submission? It would seem to be held so if we take the words of some worthy women as the criterion of their thoughts. If affection be not the motive of marriage, let the civil law alone be called in to ratify the business-transaction rather than make a mockery of the Church. Far removed as the ends of the earth are the points from which human creatures survey a like circumstance or event. To the ground on which I take my stand I have just referred. The Goodalls are rich, and the girls will each inherit a considerable

fortune; but were this not so, Mrs. Goodall's view of the case would allow her, with a perfectly clear conscience, to marry either Maria or Molly to whoever could accomplish the task known as keeping a decent roof over his wife's head.

XLVII.

IT amuses me to imagine the dissertations of my kinswomen and friends on the question of my unmarried condition. I can imagine as vividly as though I were listening to them, the comments that the fact of my living on at home provokes: "Bethia I fear now will never marry. She is not so young of course as she was, and she has really quite lost her looks." (I have heard of looks lost so frequently and from so early a date in the owners' careers that I sometimes wonder if the possession is in any respect of the nature of the widow's cruse.) Did the good ladies but know it, there need be no doubt on the subject. Fate has shown me what I take to be perfection only to deny it to me; and I cannot, as I have written already, shape my course after the rule of the shop-like petition that demands, when patterns are submitted, a second choice.

Of Bethia Hardacre

Now-a-day, people speak as though for every ill there is remedy could only the remedy be found; as though eternal life on earth and perfect health were but a question of consulting a suitable doctor of medicine; as if sorrow and pain and poverty were all to be legislated away, could the fitting legislator but be discovered. I am not of that way of thinking, and dare to acknowledge the antiquated mould of mind which admits the existence of inevitable ill. For me, "the living happy ever after," as the fairy stories say, is forbidden, and I accept the fact of life and death with no calling mine the best gifts that fate can offer. "Of course, Bethia, if you have had a disappointment, you are naturally feeling a good deal cast down," Mrs. Goodall would tell me, did I communicate to her that which I most carefully conceal. "But there is no reason why you should not be very happy all the same, if you made up your mind to accept that excellent Mr. Nincompoop, who is truly attached to you, I believe. You would have everything very nice—more than nice indeed. Nincompoop Court is quite one of the show places of Oxfordshire; and I remember old Mrs. Nincompoop's parties in Charles Street—Charles Street, Berkeley Square—when I was a girl. They are really very nice people, and I am sure he would prove a most

kind husband. You, I equally trust, would make him a good wife; and in the performance of our duty, Bethia, whatever you with your romantic impractical ideas may suppose, our truest happiness lies."

My premises and Mrs. Goodall's are hopelessly at variance. Not thought and word and deed of which the root is duty, but thought and word and deed springing from affection and trust and mutual understanding, should, in my opinion, go to form the chapters of the book of wedded life, if the book is to be aught better than a sacrilegious travesty of that most exalted title, "The *holy* estate of Matrimony."

Duty, it seems to me, may do yeoman service in every other human relationship but this. Were I married, and did I believe that the sense of duty mainly prompted the kindness shown to me by the love of my life, the belief would break my heart I think. "I do not want your kindness," I would say, "if duty alone prompts it. Prompted by duty only, it but makes me miserable."

Whilst writing the last words of the line above, the consciousness was borne in upon me that they told not the truth, but a lie. Under such conditions I might in all honesty so speak, crediting my words with truth at the time; but, alas for what Mrs. Goodall terms "womanly dignity," I should, I am

perfectly aware, very quickly return with another plea. "Show me affection again, no matter *what* the motive be. If you no longer care for me, at least pretend that you do. Cheat me (I will be easily deceived) with the semblance of your love, or I cannot live."

I must be wholly devoid of womanly dignity, I am afraid. I wonder if that which is known as "womanly dignity" often co-exists with the *in extremis* state? Is mine a nature unusually wanting in proper pride? Do I shamefully lack self-respect? The ship of all my hopes is sinking: am I a disgrace to my sex, a byword among women, if I cast aside all "standing upon ceremony," and throw myself upon the mercy of one who can save a remnant of my treasure if so he will?

(What the answer to this would be I do not know, but that the verdict would be unfavourable to me is what I think.)

Is want of womanly dignity the leading characteristic, in Mrs. Goodall's estimation, of these lines I wonder?—

"I leant my back unto an aik,
I thought it was a trusty tree;
But first it bowed, and syne it brak:
Sae my true love did lichtly me.

O waly, waly, gin love be bonnie
A little time while it is new;
But when it's auld it waxeth cauld,
And fades awa' like the morning dew.

O, wherefore should I busk my head?
Or wherefore should I kaim my hair?
For my true love has me forsook,
And says he'll never lo'e me mair.

Martinmas wind, when wilt thou blaw
And shake the green leaves off the tree?
O gentle death, when wilt thou come?
For of my life I am wearie.

'Tis not the frost that freezes fell,
Nor blawing snaw's inclemency;
'Tis not sic cauld that makes me cry,
But my love's heart grown cauld to me.

When we cam' in by Glasgow town,
We were a comely sight to see;
My love was cled in the black velvet,
And I mysel' in cramasie.

But had I wist before I kist
That love had been sae ill to win;
I had locked my heart in a case of gowd
And pinned it wi' a siller pin."

Is it true—I have heard Mrs. Goodall speak positively as though it were—that a man quite loses respect for a woman who shows him that she puts him before all else? That, though, was not the doctrine that Milton preached. Sometimes I have

thought that here perhaps Mrs. Goodall is right; sometimes I have felt almost sure that she is wholly wrong. In this, as in many another question akin to it, I journey no further than Ophelia's words—"I do not know, my lord, what I should think."

XLVIII.

I WROTE these lines last night—

A SONG OF SORCERY.

Is there no way to soften Fate,
  Remains there not one charm
By which we may her ire abate,
  Her power for ill disarm?
Is Vervain, Monkshood, Hellebore
Of use in sorcery no more?

Surely some magic still doth lie
  In Rosemary or Rue?
In Nightshade and black Bryony,
  That once formed witches' brew?
Can Lunary and Mistletoe
No longer serve for weal or woe?

* * * * * *

Mrs. Goodall is too fat. She is even slightly outstripping the generous limits permitted to the

conventional British mother. I will attempt to do her a good turn some day after the following sixteenth century fashion. Antony would aid and abet me, I am sure—

"*To make that a woman shall eat of nothing that is set upon the table.*—Take a little green Basil, and when men bring the dishes to the table put it underneath them, that the woman perceive it not. So men say that she will eat of none of that which is in the dish whereunder the Basil lieth."

XLIX.

I HAVE a new Herbal. It is a French Herbal—"Histoire Générale des plantes contenant XVIII livres également départis en deux tomes. Sortie Latine de la Bibliothèque de M. Jaques Dalechamps, puis faite Françoise par M. Jean des Moulins, médicins très-fameux de leur Siècle. A Lyon chez les Héritiers Guillaume Rouille, MDCXV," the title-page runs.

I like the French Herbal very much, and I like the kindness that gave it to me. During yesterday I felt such an odious depression I did not know really how to endure the day, and as it wore on I felt beside myself with gloom.

Towards the evening I went down to the painting-room where Antony had been busy at work. Antony is always amiable, and he never asks questions, and he never repeats. His fashion of looking vague when I confide in him suits me very well.

"Antony," I said, "I have the blues. Shall I and

the dogs interrupt you if we come and sit here for a little?"

Antony received the proposition graciously, and straightway shook up the settle-cushions for my comfort, and for that of the "Spaniels Gentle."

"Why does everything seem so dreadful sometimes, Antony?" I said.

"Are you carrying your hare's foot in your pocket?" my brother asked smiling. "And have you tried turning your cloak?" (Antony insisted on presenting me once with a hare's foot for luck. He said, to possess one was in keeping with my pose and period.)

"Do not laugh, Antony," I answered. "I feel too horrid."

Antony took the cigarette he was smoking between his fingers for a second, gazing at me the while. "You are tired," he then said decisively. "You look more than ever grown by moonlight this evening. Your blues, Bethia dearest—as our kinswoman would say—come from bodily exhaustion. Let me order you up a mutton-chop."

"I don't want a mutton-chop," I answered. I felt at the moment as if, as far as sense and self-control were concerned, I had gone back to nursery days.

Presently Antony threw the end of his cigarette on to the hearth, and began the sorting and putting

aside of his painting chattels. "I am going out," he told me; "and don't worry yourself, or I will drop a line to Mrs. Goodall to come and relieve you of the office."

Antony had gone about an hour, when a hansom brought him and an immense packet back.

"I have a little present for you," he said smiling; "one after your own heart."

And the little present is the two folio volumes of the French Herbal. There is really no one kinder than Antony. It is very ungrateful to be complaining and lamenting when there is some one always so amiable.

This morning I tried to draw in water-colour some very pale pink Sweet Peas; but, as my thoughts were all the while elsewhere, I wasted several hours in the foolish endeavour to get tolerable work from my hands notwithstanding the preoccupation of my mind.

Yes, certainly, I wholly failed to render the pale Sweet Peas, and yet I could see their loveliness. They are very dreamy flowers, with little of the mundane touch. Did I link astrology to herb-lore and sit arbitrarily ordaining such affairs, I would write down these faint, very pale pink, almost white Sweet Peas as under the dominion of the moon. Theirs is a faint, diaphanous pallor shot with just such delicate rose-

pink as that which flushes the eastern sky at dawn; and charmingly pretty are the finely-cut lines and hovering look of the flowers. They and the blue Larkspur that to-day I also attempted to paint have both to me the celestial aspect. The hue of the Larkspur is suggestive to me always of blue fire.

Larkspur lifting turquoise spires
Bluer than the sorcerer's fires.

The colour seems lambent, glittering almost. Beside turquoise Larkspur, the dear good Lupines with their clad-in-duffel mien show as homely cottage maids in the presence of a sylph.

The herbalists ascribed magical power to the "Larkespurre," called in Latin, Lyte says, "Delphynium, and of some late writers, Flos regius." Of the virtues of Larkspur he speaks as follows—"The seede of the garden Larkspurre drunken is very good agaynst the stinging of Scorpions, and indeed his virtue is so great against their poison that the herbe throwne downe before the Scorpions doth cause them to be without force or power to do hurte, so that they may not move or sturre until this herbe be taken from them." Parkinson, in the *Garden of Pleasant Flowers*, gives a chapter to Delphinium with Larkesheele for second title. "Their most usual name with us," he states, "is Delphinium, but whether it be the true Delphinium

of Dioscorides, or the Poets' Hyacinth, or the flower of Ajax," he declares to be a question for the discussing of which his pages are not the most fitting place; and with so good an example to keep me in countenance I will say the same of mine.

Whilst drawing the flowers this morning, the reason of the name Delphinium forced itself upon me. That the curves are indeed dolphinlike was the conclusion I came to long before I laid down the silver-point. The lines are very intricate, as intricate as the shimmering blue-greens and opal greys which, the silver-point drawing accomplished, I sought to represent on another surface with water-colour.

* * * * * *

To return to the subject of books, there are two works copies of which I have a great wish to possess; but I shall never possess them, I believe, for one is I think rare, and the other, though not so rare, costs so great a sum as to make it unattainable. The first is the *Book of Beasts, Birds, Flowers, Fruits,* &c., by Crespin de Passe, published at London in 1630. The other is Turner's Herbal, printed about the year 1568, which contains the account of the English Baths. Turner's Herbal is the most valuable Herbal of which I have knowledge. I heard of a good copy of it a little while ago, but the price asked (£30) made the

buying to me impossible. It is very curious and interesting, I should think, but I do not think that it, or the book by Crespin de Passe, will ever find a resting-place behind the glass doors of my cupboard; which, however, certainly holds a great many very attractive volumes bound in russet leather or old vellum.

Those Roses, the old books, have a thorn, however, and the thorn is their weight. Antony assures me that, as was Pliny, I shall be the sacrifice of my curiosity and inquiries into the nature of things, and kill myself before I achieve all I undertake. I do not attempt to witness an eruption of Vesuvius, but perhaps there is as much peril in the handling of volumes so massive that it certainly requires a robustness of frame that is not mine to accomplish, with impunity, the task of lifting them.

The translation by Philemon Holland, "doctor of Physicke," of the works of Pliny is really sufficiently heavy severely to try strength; and many other Herbals, I confess, can have the same accusation rightfully brought against them. The lovely Flower-book of the writer who twists his name into "Paradisi in Sole," *The Mystery of Husbandry*, Lyte's Herbal, Lobel's *History of Plants*, Tournefort's Herbal, the Herbal of the Bible, the Irish Herbal, the *Scots Gardener*, the Herbals of

Newton and Lovel, Rea's *Flora Pomona and Ceres*, *Le Jardinier Solitaire*, Sir Hugh Plat's *Jewel House of Art and Nature*, *The Secrets of Master Alexis*, *The Compleat Flourist*, the books of Gervase Markham, *The Garden of Health*, and many another old volume treating of herbs, husbandry, flowers, forestry, and themes akin to them, are perfectly manageable. But this cannot be said of others within the covers of which I have written my initials. Gerard's Herbal is indeed no feather-weight, and in the no-feather-weight category must I set the *Theatre of Plants* by Parkinson, the Herbals of Salmon, of Hill, of Mrs. Elizabeth Blackwell, the great Latin Herbal, bound in the original stamped vellum by Petri Andreae Matthioli, the Spanish *History of Plants* (also in the Latin tongue) of which I have already spoken, my new possession the French *Histoire Générale des Plantes*, by Dalechamps, in two thick folios, and last, but not least, the botanical work published at Rome in the year 1784, in seven really huge volumes. When my way lies Herbal-ward I have frequently to call in the aid of unskilled labour; and the thralls, when such is the case, are inclined, poor souls, to do my bidding with the air of persons paid to carry out good-humouredly the whims of the insane.

Of Bethia Hardacre

SHOWING THAT FEMALE CRUELTY IS OF SOME ANTIQUITY.

(*By Antony.*)

UPON the Muses' brows were worn
Feathers from wings of Sirens torn:
Sirens extinct, for female head
Plumes now are pulled from birds instead.

TO VENUS URANIA.

THE garlands on thine altar laid
Time cannot touch, death cannot fade;
The hearts that worship at thy shrine
The fires of pain can but refine.

OUT OF THE GREEK.

"CHARON, one favour do I ask of thee—
Ferrying my Love o'er Styx, take also me."
"Not so. My boat needs ballast: thou and he
Together too light-hearted, far, would be."

L.

I FEEL a great depression again this afternoon. I am sure that had I an effectual broomstick I would, for the sake of variety, go flying abroad for a while upon it. The weather is bitterly cold, and the poor buds and flowers that, trusting to the calendar, came out, are suffering cruelly for their misplaced confidence. "The wisest trees" in the garden are regretting their rashness, I imagine, and are themselves deploring the fact that, contrary to the dictum of the herbalists, their leaves have outstripped those of the Ash. It is as cold as Christmas, and we have now touched the end of May.

I always wish that the daylight and the warmth agreed to act in unison. When it is cold curtains and candles are much more comfortable than is the chill grey light that comes through the undisguised windows, and sometimes in February, and also in

November, the darkness closes over the warm, soft air of the afternoon and hides away the Violets of the spring or the late Roses of the autumn whilst we might be admiring them out of doors. But when there is such a bleak, bitter blast as now is blowing I do not care to see the flowers. They look so unhappy and tired. It makes me wish to transplant all I see to some happy island, where the wind does not blow and there is no wearisome battling with it to fatigue the poor blossoms. Flowers hate the east wind as much, I think, as I do, but I notice how much the eastern sun benefits them. I do not know if there is any peculiar quality valuable to human life in the morning sun, but it seems as if to many flowers it is life-giving. Perhaps the old adages in praise of early rising were the outcome of a belief in the merit of the sunlight as well as the air whilst the day was young.

In a letter that came to me this morning, I hear that the Thorn-blossom is so lovely in Arcady at present. Even the hedges that are kept clipped and closely trimmed are white, the writer said. I should like to see those snow-laid avenues. I do not behold the spring of Arcady in these latter days.

I wrote this Masque of May rhyme after reading the letter—

THE MASQUE OF MAY.

AURORA now seems always here,
For pink May-flower's in bloom;
And starlit all those paths appear
Which silver Thorns illume;
The pride of morn, the spell of night
In May-tide's pageants thus unite.

Lilacs such amethysts unfold
That with eve's dusk compare;
Rival to noon's, Laburnum's gold
As sunshine gilds the air;
The peace of eve, the pomp of day
Unite thus in the Masque of May.

I cannot say that I admire the verse. I wish that I could paint a picture of the Masque of May. The flush of the dawn aglow with pink blossom; the gold of noon—the light shot with Laburnum-flowers; evening's grey mists incarnated in the dim amethyst of the Lilac's garlands; night's moon and starlight crystallized in the silver radiance of the White-Thorn. I should, however, doubtless but produce a distressing daub if I tried, and it is useless to try.

I am writing with great difficulty to-day, and am continually lifting my eyes to the face of the clock, which is simply motionless. It has pointed to five

minutes to six for the last quarter of an hour; and were it not for the ticking I should think that the wretch has stopped. What is Time? I had a drug given to me once that affects sensation in regard to Time. The taking of it seems to draw Time out to Eternity. What, then, can Time be if the druggist can dispense a draught that seems to lengthen it indefinitely? I should recommend the happy and fortunate to take the drug to which I refer regularly, and their bliss would certainly be of long duration. To the sorrowful and those fretted by suspense I give one piece of advice: Search high and low, early and late, for this drug's antidote.

One of my dogs is strangely greedy, and I cannot allow him to indulge to the full his taste for food. If I administered a little dose of the physic in question he might fancy himself swallowing delightful morsels of food for the space of five hours instead of seconds. I think it would be only charitable so to pleasure the poor beast. As it is, his enjoyment is so brief that I fancy sometimes it can scarcely be called enjoyment. Eager anticipation, lively hope, a gulp, and then the wrong side of happiness.

That slug, my clock, has at length reached the moment when it falls in with my purpose to lay

down my pen. Clock, I thank you kindly; and if it is all the same to you, perhaps you will jog on a little faster to-morrow. Or perhaps a petition to Fate would better meet the needs of the case: Fate, give me my heart's desire, and my clock will travel on fast enough.

LI.

WERE I to show the pertinacious female questioners the pages that I wrote yesterday they would certainly demand of me "What is your heart's desire?" and I should as certainly refuse to gratify their curiosity.

For my own part, I have ever regretted the strewing broadcast of facts. He was a sage assuredly who said that "truth is too precious to be wasted." The aftermath of confidence-giving is seldom, I think, free from regret, and free from resolutions of greater prudence in future. The power of speech, I sometimes feel, was given to women to save them from an excess of pride and self-satisfaction. The recollection of our words serves to keep us low, as did the old acts of Church penance. Whilst we can remember our spoken and return to our written speeches there is little need for white shifts and lighted candles. So

far, indeed, as I have seen, woe not weal comes to a woman from failing to keep her own counsel. Perhaps with the other sex this is not so. It was man to man who said—

> "Give sorrow words: the grief that does not speak
> Whispers the o'erfraught heart and bids it break."

To adorn a gossip's tale at every tea-party is more embittering, as I see things, than is it to "pull your hat upon your brows" and go silent.

I have just thought of an answer for use with the pertinacious female inquirers when they put to me the question "What is your heart's desire?"

A REPLY.

> My heart's desire my heart will ne'er impart,
> Till that desire has faded from my heart.

"And when will that be?" the pertinacious female inquirers will continue.

WHEN THAT WILL BE.

> When Schiehallion's heights look down
> On the streets of London town;
> When the Thames embankment hems
> In the Lyon not the Thames:
> When the White-Thorn and the Heather
> Blossom in Hyde Park together;

When I from my windows see
Nor those shops but Amulree:
When the lamp-posts put forth Whin,
Will my heart's desire begin,
Very slowly, to depart,
For one moment from my heart.

Apropos of hearts, if hearts are as deceitful as the Psalmist says, why have we the truest liking for those with whom we find the completest mutual understanding? Here we have not a trait bred of deceit. Or was the Psalmist intentionally only referring to the hearts of men, and excepting those of women? I do not know if a man would wish a woman, however beloved, thoroughly to understand all that he feels and thinks and does, but to be rightly read is what, in such a case, a woman asks, I am sure. The more perfect the understanding the better for her, is what I think a woman feels if she cares very much for any one. This opinion may spring from silliness, but not from deceit.

The Psalmist must purposely have omitted mention of the heart of women surely. It is the heads of women that sometimes are deceitful, if there is deceit at all, not their hearts.

LII.

THIS verse is all that I can think of to write in my book to-day—

TO ——

I FAIN would of that country hear
Wherein you are a sojourner;
That land of dreams, dreams of my own,
Of which you've ta'en possession;
That land, by sleep when thither led,
I find by you is tenanted.

Tell me, whence leads that Rose-lit road
That, dreaming, I with you have trod?
In what dread region did I see
You turn in sternest wrath from me?
Where were we when you said you knew
All that I cannot say to you?

Naught do I know of sleep's domain
Save I am there with you again;
Each dusky haunt, each shadowy space,
To me is but a trysting-place;
And I would learn all you can tell
Of precincts in which now you dwell.

How idle I am. I had intended to put the last stitches this morning into the curtains that I have embroidered with Tulips and Irises for Antony's room. But I did not. I feel so restless—restless almost beyond endurance.

LIII.

I HAVE never shaken myself free from the superstition that morning dreams come true. Last night, or rather early this morning a dream, startlingly vivid, came to me. I dreamt that I was sitting here in this wicker chair by the window so that the light should fall upon my paper, drawing flowers just as I have done a hundred times in the afternoon before. I thought I was drawing a wreath of the flower I call the flower-of-luck (because of the flower I bought "to change the luck" of a man in the street), a wreath of Heliotrope blossom. I thought I was sitting here drawing, and that the distant sound, irritating to me rather, of the scraping of Antony's fiddle as he practised, reached me as it does nearly every afternoon from the room below. And I thought that the door suddenly opened, and some one for the sight of whose face I have wearied, till I felt as if existence meant

but unsatisfied longing, stood on the threshold. And I thought behind him lay a heap of fetters as though they were just cast off. And I thought I rose to my feet, as I did once before, and stretched out my arms, and that he quickly crossed the floor, and that I felt his arms about me again and his kisses again on my lips. And I thought after a moment he said, "Child, you shall not cry any more. Dry your tears, the luck has changed."

I awoke, and all the day I felt so strange, as if almost I were in a dream still. And that something was about to happen I kept telling myself; and telling myself too that I was a fool. Even in the old book it said that the mind must be free from care for morning dreams to come true, and my mind was never now free from care; I was so unhappy always. And in the afternoon I went out of doors and bought some flowers; and I got together my drawing things, and I made a wreath of Heliotrope blossom, and I set the chair just where I had seen it in the dream and arranged it all. I will cheat myself, I thought, into thinking that he will come, though I know he cannot. Just for one brief space out of all this long misery I will pretend to myself that I am really expecting him. I have told myself before that madness lies this way, but for this afternoon I gave in to

myself, and thought I would believe that it would be as I wished; for that I could not bear the wretchedness any longer I was saying all the while to myself. I felt as if I could not. And then I began to draw, and as I drew, half audible notes of Antony's violin came from the room below. And then there was a stir in the house, and I went on with the drawing of the flower-of-luck garland; but my dogs moved and looked towards the door. And then the door opened, and he stood there in reality; and, as I did in my dream, I rose to my feet and stretched out my arms, and as in the dream he came very quickly across the floor, and again in truth I felt his arms about me, and again his kisses on my lips. And when I could speak I raised my head from his shoulder and said, "Dearest, say 'Child, you shall not cry any more. Dry your tears, the luck has changed.'"

And then he laughed. "I will say whatever you bid me," he said, "you curious dear child."

* * * * * *

By and by I went to tell my uncle of it all. "What have I done to deserve such bliss?" I said. "I have been rebellious and angry and embittered, and have prayed night after night that I might never awake in

this world again; and now God has given me what is to me the best thing the whole world holds; the one soul on earth for whom I really care."

My uncle was very kind; and when I asked him if I had not been very horrid and bitter and wicked, "Perhaps not so very, poor child," he answered, and kissed my hand.

Antony is in high spirits this evening. "You are carrying your hare's foot, of course," he told me; "and is it another dozen Herbals that would now please you as a gift?"

The thought of the Herbals fell flat, I confess. Did I ever care about anything but this, even flowers, much? The flowers and the medicinal flower-lore and the curious old treatises seem of not the slightest moment. Did Parkinson and John Tradescant themselves come into the room my attention would not be arrested, I believe. I could pass through the days to come, I think, treading on oilcloth and looking out on the world contentedly through windows curtained with Mrs. Goodall's green rep. I say *tread*, but I do not feel as though I any longer walked on solid ground. I feel as if I were lifted up into heaven, whilst down below my feet the waves of a great sea of bliss are flowing in. . . . I wish that life

had given my uncle what he wanted. . . . I wish that Cicely might have married Antony. I wish that every living creature had the perfected contentment that I have.

* * * * * *

I cannot slee[illegible]ight. As soon as I lie down I feel as if I m[illegible] up again and sit on the side of my bed a[illegible] and realise that "the luck has changed[illegible]d three books are beside me on the bed, and I feel as if each holds what pertains to me. One is the book that contains the prayer of Odysseus for Nausicaa. Another is the book of the Psalms of David, in which be the verses that tell of a pity like unto a father's for his own children, and of a mercy that "knoweth whereof we are made" and "remembereth that we are but dust." The third is the book of prayer that my father—my father who died when I was a child—used, and the fly-leaf of which bears the words in his handwriting, "*Cor unum via una.*"

THE END.

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WITH YOU, RIGHT THROUGH

on 28 December, 2018